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LETTERS

FROM THE FRONTIERS.

WRITTEN DURING A PERIOD OF THIRTY YEARS' SERVICE
IN THE ARMY OF THE UNITED STATES.

BY
MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE A. McCALL,
LATE COMMANDER OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RESERVE CORPS.

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INTRODUCTION.

The following Letters, published in compliance with the expressed desire of those valued friends for whose eyes alone they were originally intended, are taken, chiefly, either from copies retained by the writer at the time, or from the originals which have recently been placed in his hands by those to whom they were addressed. Many of them, embracing perhaps the longest and those written with most care, have been copied *verbatim* under his own eye. Some have been docked of their redundance, trimmed into shape, and redressed so far as was requisite in preparing for the press letters written *currente calamo*, and comprising subjects of various descriptions, as well personal as of a general character. Others may be said to have been re-written, always, however, preserving strictly the outline and main features of the subject, and the facts and incidents by which it was sought to be illustrated. One or two were written for publication, and appeared in the journals of the day; they are here introduced unaltered. Many are mere extracts. Two or three incidents only are related which did not pass under the writer's own eye; these were communicated directly by officers of character, who were themselves eye-witnesses, and they are so noticed where introduced. Nothing has been exaggerated, nor is there much that is even highly colored. The reader may therefore rely upon the Letters, taken collectively, as a fair and just delineation of the peoples, the countries, the incidents and adventures into which the writer was led in the course of a long military service. They commenced with the commencement of his military career; for a few weeks only had passed from the day on which he was graduated at the Military Academy at West Point,—while in the full enjoyment of emancipation from the rigid though wholesome discipline of a military school, and proud of the elevation from a Cadetship to a Lieutenancy,—when he received orders to join a detachment of one hundred and twenty recruits destined for his regiment, and a company of the 2d Artillery stationed at Pensacola. Here he encountered and mingled with a people strangely differing in manners and habits from those of his native State; but who nevertheless possessed traits of amiability and gentleness in the women, and a love of pleasure in the men, which rendered them commonly unobtrusive, but sometimes fiery and vehement where they thought their rights were invaded.

Here, and at other military posts in Florida, he passed several years; at times amid the wild scenery of that country whose climate, in mildness and salubrity, yields to that of no other portion of our national domain; a land where the atmosphere is so pure and bright that the mere sense of existence is absolutely a physical as well as a moral pleasure, not appreciable by one who has not experienced it. Here he rode through her silent woods, and sat by her magnificent springs, at an age when impressions are readily received, but firmly stamped upon the mind and feelings. It was such scenes, and the feelings with which they were associated, that he endeavored to sketch in the language of one for whom

"Nature in her wildest hour of infancy" has always possessed unrivalled charms. His service in the course of years carried him over the whole of the southern and western territory to the Rocky Mountains; and these Letters are his efforts to portray the accidents by flood and field, "all of which he saw, and part of which he was;" and they are submitted, with their original imperfections scarcely amended, to the clemency of the reader.

BELAIR, *November*, 1867.

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LETTERS FROM THE FRONTIERS.

CANTONMENT CLINCH, November 1, 1822.

MY DEAR H——: We arrived (with recruits for the 4th Regiment of Infantry and a company of artillery) in the harbor of Pensacola on the 28th ult., after a voyage of fifteen days from Philadelphia, in the brig *William Henry*. The weather was what a sailor, I suppose, would call favorable; for though we had some stiff breezes, they were from the right quarter, and allowed our vessel to keep her course; but the passage to a novice in sea-service was rather too rough to be agreeable, and I suffered from sea-sickness for the first week, in common with some ladies and gentlemen of New Orleans, who had taken berths in the fine brig. The only occurrence worthy of note was in passing through the northeast channel of the Bahama Islands. In the night the current had carried us to the southward of the channel. Fortunately the captain was on deck; he put the helm hard down and let go the anchor, when the brig swung round and lay in good water not a stone's throw from the island of New Providence. This happened just before day, and not a word was said to any of the passengers; so that when I went on deck, I was not a little surprised to find myself in still water and alongside of land. By eight o'clock we discovered a large sail-boat coming round a point of the island about a mile distant. This was soon followed by another and another, until at last we counted no less than thirty-two sail or oar boats steering for our vessel. As several piracies had been committed in these waters within a few months, Captain Sands, who was in command of the recruits, thought it prudent to arm a few of the men. Accordingly a box of muskets and one of ball cartridges were opened and issued. The men, with the exception of the squad that had been armed, were ordered below, and the latter were concealed behind the gunwale. The leading boat was an eight-oared barge, with nine as ill-looking fellows on board as you might wish to see. When within twenty or thirty feet of the side of the brig, they were ordered to come-to, and the armed men rose. At this there was some alarm manifest among the wreckers from the town of Nassau, for such they proved to be, and they formed in line off our side. The cockswain of the eight-oared barge wished to come on board and pilot the brig out; but one of the men in another boat called out, "Don't trust him!" Much disappointment, hereupon, was expressed, either openly or covertly, on finding that we were not aground. And although several offers were made to pilot us out, the Captain wisely declined them; and a breeze springing up at the time, he got under weigh and brought us safely through the channel.

CANTONMENT CLINCH, November 8, 1822.

MY DEAR H——: A week has rolled quietly and pleasantly by, since I informed you of my arrival at Pensacola. The first thing that greeted my raw, unpractised eye, within a few yards of the landing, at the foot of Palafox Street, was the corpse of a man who had died of the yellow fever, laid out in front of the open window of the first floor of a house fronting on this street. Here was proof sufficient of the truth of the report we heard before leaving Philadelphia, that "*Yellow Jack*" had already, in August, made his appearance in these waters; first at the village of Barrancas, in front of which a schooner from Boston with a cargo of codfish had anchored to examine a leak, and finding her entire cargo spoiled, had thrown it overboard in shoal water and proceeded on her voyage to New Orleans without saying as much as "*with your leave*, or *by your leave*." The consequence was, the breaking out of the fever in the village; next in the garrison of the Fort, and at last in the town of Pensacola itself, where it raged with great fury, driving the regiment away to the Bayou, two miles to the westward. Here I found the regiment in two battalions, in sheds about a quarter of a mile apart, and the greater part of the men on "*daily duty*," cutting logs and "*riving clapboards*" for new barracks, to be erected at the headwaters of this bayou or inlet. The name of the Post is to be "*Cantonment Clinch*," in honor of our distinguished and highly respected Colonel. I have been assigned to company (C), at present commanded by 1st Lieut. Jos. B. Shaw, a most amiable gentleman, and I have no doubt a true soldier, although we have absolutely no military duty to perform,—all our men being on the details in the woods. The consequence is, that the officers, with the exception of two or three who have charge of the working parties, are gentlemen of leisure; cards, hunting, or making love to the pretty Creoles of the town, being their almost sole occupation. My *penchant* has led me to join the hunters; though I have time also to cultivate the acquaintance of "*les belles demoiselles*" of Pensacola; and I have ample opportunity to see daily, and study hourly, the strange commixture of manners and habits of these descendants of the Spaniard, the Frenchman, and the Englishman, who make up the population of the town. Florida, as you know, before it came under the protection or sovereignty, and the ameliorating influence, of the *stars and stripes*, had successively passed under the dominion of Spain, France, and England. There is consequently a great diversity, and at the same time a strange similarity in the appearance of individuals, and their habits and manners, the natural result of a mingling of races; and although climate has had its effect, in many respects, on the original settlers, yet the present generation, in a degree more or less striking, bear the stamp of ancestral origin and character not to be mistaken. In the Spaniard, it is least perceptible; in the French, whose natural conviviality soon assimilates them to the people with whom they are associated, it is less; and in the English, more conspicuous. The three languages are spoken respectively by the representatives of the three nations. But if I except the English, the Spanish is probably more spoken in society, and is more or less understood by all. The Spanish, French, and English having intermarried, their descendants, who are termed "*Creoles*," begin to form something like a distinct provincial character; their prominent traits wearing a coloring peculiarly their own, the effect of climate, mode of life, and other decidedly local causes. Although their excessive indolence and aversion to exertion, either physical or mental, which is commonly apparent, would lead one to the conclusion that they are listless and effeminate, yet they are not without a good deal of excitability, and frequently I have noticed that their passions are, at the same time, sudden, violent, and lasting.

Their morality, I must confess, is not always of the strictest character; yet they appear to be affectionate and friendly in their intercourse with each other; hospitable to strangers, and not unkind to their slaves. They have no love for knowledge; and their habitual indifference to everything but pleasure leads them to take little part in politics, either national or local. As I have already remarked, they have no solicitude in perfecting the faculties of the mind; yet they bestow no small care and attention in training those of the body, and in improving the natural ease and grace of carriage for which the females are almost always remarkable. The men have little love of glory and less of enterprise. The French Creoles are less animated and vivacious than their European ancestors; the Spanish, while they possess something of the gravity of the Spaniard, are without his pride; and, though in disposition rather inclined to be serious, they are commonly frivolous and childish in their amusements. They are temperate at table, but profligates in love. Their persons are well formed, and their features regular,—those of the women possess much beauty and are expressive of gentleness, if not of cheerfulness. Want is a stranger in their simple abodes; and the turmoil of ambition being unknown, they enjoy that negative state of happiness in which the moments unheeded pass by with a soft and airy tread. Owing to their gentle and easy life, their manners assume a mildness, and their speech a softness that are peculiarly fascinating. In conversation, their enunciation is slow, but not *drawling;* in the females particularly, this languid mode of utterance, accompanied by the luring sweetness of expression natural to their soft, dark eyes, is well calculated to wake the tender passion.

These characteristics of the "Creoles" must be understood as representing the mass of the native-born inhabitants of the town, and not as portraying the wealthy and educated class; which, however, is so small in numbers as to make it necessary that we should consider them rather as individual families, forming exceptions to the general character of the population, than as constituting in themselves a distinct class.

The predominant creed is still the Catholic, and the sole edifice consecrated to the worship of the Deity is a chapel of antique stamp and rusty exterior, on the south side of the "*Plaza*," as the public square here is called. At this shrine the inhabitants of Pensacola of all denominations are accustomed to assemble to offer up their prayers, and to receive the godly admonitions and the spiritual consolation of the venerable Father Pierre.

On a bright Sabbath morning, standing at the corner of the Plaza, it is interesting to watch the motley multitude of grave and gay, aged and young, wending their way towards the house of worship. There is the elderly Spanish lady, whose thick veil descends in ample folds about her person, followed at a respectful distance by the neatly-dressed slave, carrying her chair and cushion; the first of these articles being inverted in such a way that the bottom rests on the gay cotton handkerchief with which the girl's head is decorated, and the back descending behind, leaves one hand free for salutation, while the other clasps the cushion. Then come a group of young men, loitering indolently along; these are followed by an old Frenchman, all complaisance, bowing to all he meets. Last of all appears the feminine, black-eyed, *naïve* young Creole, whose air and carriage are as striking and attractive as her dress is simple and modest.

I mingle with the crowd now gathering from all quarters, and slowly converging toward the place of worship; with them I enter the building. The lofty, ill-lighted dome displays little of architectural symmetry; the rough floor of large rugged flag-stones, and the dark walls, altogether give the place an antiquated and gloomy air. It is evidently the product of Spanish art and labor of years long passed.

The service commences. The music of the choir is full and harmonious, and as the solemn strains swell upon the ear, one cannot but feel that the chant of praise, though not embellished by the vigor and efficacy of science, is well suited to rouse the soul to a consciousness of its own high attributes, and to raise the mind to that elevation of thought that fits one for devotion. Who is there that has not experienced at such times a feeling of more than usual seriousness, without being able to say whence it actually comes? — a moment when the heart is opened, and the mind is expanded by an unknown, subtile, and incomprehensible agency; when the veil of self-sufficiency, which commonly conceals our imperfections from our own view, is removed, sensibility is awakened, and so vividly are we impressed with the lowness and helplessness of our nature, that the proud and ambitious spirit, which lately directed and governed our selfish course, is softened into a feeling of universal benevolence; when we unconsciously sink upon our knees and offer up a prayer, the offspring of a contrite heart, for forgiveness and guidance hereafter.

The solemnities proceeded, but my eyes wandered over the congregation, and at last I became thoughtful and abstracted; Father Pierre's sermon, which was as long and lucid as usual, was quite thrown away upon me; and the final service was nearly concluded before I was aroused from my reverie of home and friends. However, I moved out with the crowd, and, near the door, meeting with Captain Hinds, he introduced me to a young Creole with whom he was walking. Fernando, or Ferdinand Oreo, is the son of a French Creole, a widow, whose husband was of Spanish extraction: a man of two-and-twenty summers, and of perfect form and feature. His is one of the few families of wealth and education, of which I have hitherto spoken.

The day was lovely, and we strolled across the public square to the billiard saloon, which we entered. The tables were all occupied, and the calls of "*dos por me,*" "*tres mas*," &c., resounded through the rooms, accompanied with the click of the balls as the "*cannon*" was made, or the jingle of the little bell when a ball was "*held*." Such here, my dear H——, is the easy transit from the church to the billiard-table. The Captain and Ferdinand took possession of the table first released, and commenced their game with a perfect nonchalance that would to you have been, perhaps, a little surprising. When the "*rubber*" was finished, we were invited by Ferdinand to accompany him home, with the promise of a glass of light wine and a cigar. His house is a large, double frame building, with wide piazzas, and looks out upon the calm waters of the bay at the foot of Palafox Street. A few minutes' walk brought us to his door. We found his mother, a tall, stately person, and her daughter, a charming girl of eighteen, in the parlor. Wine was brought by a pretty quadroon girl; and the silver waiter holding it was placed on the table.

After we had taken wine, our host said, "Now, let me offer you a cigar, a true specimen, *fabrica de tabacos de la vuelta de abajo*."

While sitting here, enjoying the fragrance of the tobacco from the "*lower district*," I noticed upon the table the rattle of a large rattlesnake, and taking it into my hand to examine it, Ferdinand remarked that he had killed the monster a day or two before, just without the limits of the town. I expressed a desire to see so formidable a reptile, and to hear the sound of his challenge.

"It is a startling sound," said Ferdinand; "and I can give you some idea of it," continued he, taking the rattle. He fastened it to a string, and giving it a peculiar, rapid, and continuous shake, he produced a whirring sound that had indeed a startling effect. The thrilling challenge had scarcely rung through the room, when a pet fawn, that was lying near the young lady's chair, suddenly sprang to its feet, and, at a single bound, leaped to a considerable distance, in a direction opposite to that from which the sound had proceeded; then, turning about, the timid creature erected its beautiful head and neck, and striking violently on the floor with its forefeet, exhibited the extreme excitement of mingled fear and rage.

"My poor E-cho!" said Carlota, "how he has terrified you."

"It is not a pleasing signal to my ear," replied her brother; "but mark you the agency of instinct in the brute creation there manifested. Your favorite E-cho was captured when but a few days' old, and, in all probability, I might almost say certainty, never saw a rattlesnake, or heard that threatening signal sounded before this minute; yet you have seen how instantly nature warns her of impending danger. And look, too, how her bright eye flashes with anger. I do believe that little E-cho is sufficiently roused to do battle with her natural enemy."

"I have heard," remarked Captain Hinds, "that fierce encounters are not unfrequent between the deer and rattlesnake."

"It is a truth that I can vouch for," returned Ferdinand, "for I once had the fortune to witness the combat. I was passing through a dense hummock, when, as I reached the edge of an open space, I came suddenly upon a full-grown buck, whose attention was so engrossed by some object on the ground near him, that he was not aware of my approach. I drew up my rifle, but at that moment I heard the quick, angry warning of the rattlesnake, and at the same instant the deer sprang upwards, and drawing all its feet together as it were to a point, dashed them fiercely upon the ground, while, before the eye could follow the motion, he rebounded to a distance. The rattle was repeated, but more faintly; it was followed by several similar attacks on the part of the deer in quick succession. Then for a moment all was still; and the noble buck, throwing back his head and raising his nose to the wind, discovered that he was in the presence of another enemy, even more to be dreaded than the one he had just conquered. Tossing back his heavy antlers, he wheeled, and bounded majestically into the thicket. You will readily conclude that I allowed him to depart in peace. On going to the spot where the combat had taken place, I found a large rattle-snake stretched upon the ground, with his head positively cut and battered to pieces." *

We passed an hour with my new friend, and then returned to our quarters at the Cantonment

PENSACOLA, November 20, 1822.

MY DEAR H——: Since my last letter to you, we have had a grand "*Patgo.*" "A grand Patgo!" you will ask, "and pray, what is a Patgo, great or small?" I must tell you: it is an entertainment resembling in some measure the old Scottish "*Popinjay shooting.*" It is an amusement of ancient origin, and even at the present time seems to be held in high esteem at Pensacola. The preliminaries are conducted in this way: a few days before the entertainment is to take place, the Host, having procured the figure of a fine chicken cock, of large size, fashioned out of a tough knotty block of wood, through which passes vertically an iron rod, whereupon the figure lightly whirls about like a weathercock. He sends this emblem of the gallant bird, mounted upon a staff, by a gayly dressed servant to the houses of the invited fair ones; and each lady presenting a bunch of ribbons or a

* Some years after the above was penned, the writer witnessed, near Tampa Bay, a similar combat, fought precisely as above described.

feather for his toilet, soon his varied honors floating from his sides clothe him with a plumage of the brightest dyes.

Not less admired, in his own estimation, is the highly costumed negro, who bears aloft his brilliant banner through the streets, with the air of a hero leading his followers into battle. This amusement, I am told, is not by any means so common as it was some years ago, since the families of the older inhabitants have become merged into the mass of the American population. On the day appointed for the fete, the Patgo or Game Bird, is mounted on a high flag-staff, and the gentlemen who are to contend for prizes, are assembled with their lady-loves under a spacious arbor erected for the occasion. This is at the distance of about sixty yards from the mark, at which the gallants are to try their skill with their rifles. Whenever a ribbon is cut down, the fortunate marksman brings it into the bower, where it is acknowledged as her offering by the lady who had placed it on the bird; the gentleman thereupon claims her as his partner for the first dance to succeed the final destruction of the Patgo; he is likewise entitled to wear the trophy of his skill at his button-hole during the day.

Having now put you in possession of the main features of the Patgo, I will proceed to describe in detail the adventures of the day as they passed before my eyes on this occasion.

Mr. De La Rue, a French Creole, the gentleman at whose house we were invited to a *déjeûner à la fourchette*, and to take part in the amusements of the day, is possessed of a fine farm some seven miles up the Bay of Pensacola. His house, situated on a high bluff overlooking the calm waters of the Escambia, the right arm of the former Bay, is accessible from Pensacola either by land or by water. On the day before that named in the invitation to the officers of the 4th Regiment, I went under the wing of old Captain Riddle, a retired officer of the war of 1812, to call upon Madame La Broche, for the double purpose of making the acquaintance of her two daughters and offering them seats in my boat to Madame La Rue's; for being without a horse, I had decided on making the trip by water; and Lt.-Col. Brooke commanding the post, had politely granted my request to be allowed to take his six-oared barge for the voyage. We found Madame and her daughters Josephine and Isabel at home. The mother graciously thanked me for the honor, saying that Isabel, the prettiest of the two, had promised to go on horseback with Mr. Pinder the Russian Consul, but that Josephine and her *Aunt* (a single lady of a certain age) would be happy to accept my offer. I cast my eye at the old Dragoon, as I expressed our gratification, and assurance that WE would take good care of the ladies, and saw by the curl of his long proboscis that he did not like the qualification of Madame in accepting the invitation; for Riddle, although an old cock, was still a devoted admirer of the sex.

I must now tell you somewhat about the fair one I had engaged to take charge of for the day. Her father was a Frenchman, her mother of Spanish blood. Josephine, the elder, was of about twenty summers; Isabel, about eighteen. The former, a fine Spanish brunette: the latter, fair as the fairest of Castile's daughters in the time of Ferdinand and Isabella: a transparent skin, large soft blue eyes, and a profusion of fair hair which hung in close clusters about a neck like marble, had won the admiration of the consul, as well they might. I was, however, satisfied with my own good fortune, and returned to evening parade, anticipating a pleasant voyage on the morrow. The morning wished for by many light hearts came. The Captain and I were abroad long before sunrise; and escorted the ladies to the beach. There, among half a dozen others, was my boat in waiting. I had selected six good oarsmen from my company, whose clean white jackets and trousers gave them quite a nautical look. A gay company was already assembling, and all were being merrily stowed away in the boats. Bright Phœbus had just risen, and he came bounding over a world of waters, peering into more pretty faces than here usually graced his rising. We soon, however, got under weigh, and then the white canvas awning shielded the fair voyagers from his more direct rays, and cast a cool and agreeable shade around, softening the glow of both sky and water, and promoting that serenity of mind which all those who have been much upon the water have experienced under similar circumstances.

I will not inflict upon you an account of the anxious attempts of my friend the bold Dragoon, who understood little of French, and nothing of Spanish, at gallant speeches. With regard to myself, thanks to my old teacher Claud Berard, at the Military Academy, I made out rather better.

My crew had been well selected; the boat sprang forward under the efforts of their well-timed oars and my skill at the helm with the spirit of a courser. The oars bend at every vigorous stroke, and soon we take the lead of the little fleet. As we advance, large flocks of waterfowl rise in dark clouds, with a noise like that of an approaching tornado, and wheeling across the bay, seek safer retreats in the deep coves of Santa Rosa. Shoals of porpoises ride past, sporting in the sunshine on the gentle surface of the wave, and all nature seems to partake of the spirit of this joyous hour. What a magnificent sheet of water! One would almost imagine that peace and contentment might forever reign in yon quiet and secluded nook! It is, however, but the home of the timid and innocent deer. But cast your eyes to the left as we turn that point. Some two miles beyond, you observe a high red wall, that seems to rise from the water's edge, increasing in altitude as you follow it along It looks at this distance like a huge terrace, and the live-oaks that crown its summit, like a mass of shrubbery. That is the commencement of "Red Bluff," upon the highest point of which is the mansion of M. De La Rue. As we move swiftly and smoothly along and approach nearer and nearer to our destination, you may perceive to the right of what seems to be a single large bush, a white speck, which even at this distance reflects the rays of the sun. That speck is the house to which we are bound, and the bush is a magnificent grove of live-oaks. At length, as we draw more near, we can distinguish many persons on the edge of the bluff watching our approach.

Meanwhile my boat had kept the lead of the little fleet with which we left the town; two other boats, however, were close upon us; and we had scarcely landed on a long slip which ran out from the beach to deep water, when the others arrived; and together we moved on to the shore. A level margin of some thirty yards of yellow or reddish sand was to be crossed before we reached the bluff. And there, by winding flights of stairs, we began the ascent of a perpendicular gravel-bluff of sixty feet in height. Having gained the top, we were met by Monsieur and Madame De La Rue with friendly greetings. We accompanied our host and hostess to the mansion, where we mingled with those of the guests who had already arrived by land.

The building, though large, was simple. In front was a Venetian piazza, extending the whole width of the house. The view here was fine. Orange, fig, and pomegranate-trees of great size were growing on either side of the entrance; and two gigantic live oaks, the growth of centuries, cast their shade on the east and west of the building, which fronted the water. A grove of the same noble trees was at a short distance, on the west of the house; while on the east was the garden, where the most exquisite collection of fruits and flowers were mingling their beauties and their sweets in soft and delicious harmony. The natural broad terrace in front commanded a view of the sweeping expanse of water, and the long, low line of the opposite shore of Santa Rosa. Altogether, a more delightful abode the listless languor of the Creole could not have pictured to his fertile imagination.

When all the guests had arrived, the doors of the breakfast-room were thrown open, and the disclosure of a plentiful and rich repast regaled the senses of the company, on whom the fresh air of morning had not failed to exercise its appetizing influence. A joyous hour was passed at the breakfast-table; and in the course of another hour the sound of a bugle called together the scattered groups, some of whom were wandering in the garden in quest of bouquets, while others were strolling under the oak-trees, or seated on the terrace in contemplation of the scenery in front. This was the signal to repair to the field of action. All parties speedily collected at the house; here our host and hostess, followed by a large bevy of gallants and belles, led the way to the grounds, where a long arbor, composed of magnolia-branches, open on the north side, had been erected. Here a band of music was playing a martial air; seats were placed for the accommodation of the ladies, affording them a view of the *Patgo*, which was already elevated on its tall staff, sixty yards in front.

Immediately in front of the centre of the arbor was a little projection, which shaded a post, into the sides of which wooden pins had been driven for the purpose of affording a "*rest*" to those of the aspirants for distinction as marksmen who chose to avail themselves of such adventitious aid; though, to the credit of the hunters of

Florida, it must be acknowledged that but very few of them deigned to ask the aid of a "*rest*,"—"*off-hand*" shooting being the common practice amongst those whose martial tastes led them to prefer the rifle.

Custom, or the law of the Patgo, requires the "*King*," as the master of the entertainment is designated, to open the game by firing the first shot. M. De La Rue now advanced to the "rack" in which the arms stood, (both those brought by visitors, as well as those belonging to the house,) and selecting a beautiful, light, silver-mounted rifle, his favorite piece, stepped out from the post, and, raising it quickly to his shoulder, fired.

At the crack of the rifle a red ribbon separated itself from the side of the bird, which at the moment stood facing the company, and floated gracefully to the ground. A murmur of approbation was heard, and a little negro boy brought the ribbon to his master. Several of the guests successively advanced, and in turn, taking their own or other rifles from the rack, blazed away at the mark: not a ribbon fell. The aim had been too central, and the bullets were heard plainly to clink upon the hard body of the bird. M. De La Rue then came up to me, and, as a compliment to a stranger, requested me to try my hand. Thus prompted, I could not decline the honor. I accordingly walked up to the "rack," and, taking from it at hazard a rifle, I delivered my fire; a fine, broad party-colored ribbon was launched into the air, and glided smoothly to the ground. The little darkey brought it to me, and, as he delivered it, our host came smiling forward, congratulated me on my skill, and said: "As you are the first of the guests that has gained a trophy, you are entitled to salute the Queen." He accompanied, or rather half led me to where his *cara sposa* was seated. She at once rose, smiled, and presented her cheek, upon which I absolutely impressed a kiss before I well knew exactly what I was about; for I had not heard of the existence of a law of the Patgo so stringent, until the moment I was required to comply with it.

I believe, from what I heard afterwards, that I acquitted myself with perfect propriety. The lady, after receiving the tribute I had paid, still smiling, told me I must now find the owner of the ribbon, and claim her for the first dance. I had now to go the rounds, with the trophy held up in my hand before me, until I came to a demoiselle who acknowledged it to have been presented by herself. I finished by obtaining the promise of her hand for the first *contra-dance;* and having placed the streamer in my button-hole, Miss Clara Teresa humorously told me she should know me again by my badge.

Several gallants following in succession, tried their skill, with more or less success, when our Surgeon Coburn was called upon to display his knowledge of the science of projectiles. The doctor is a fussy person of five feet six, rather rotund for his perpendicular extension, with a full animated face, expressive of high intellectual faculties, mingled with good-natured complaisance, and a full share of self-approbation. He is withal a general favorite with the officers of the regiment, as he is not without a quaint drollery, which, seasoned with a spice of wit, gives force to his repartee. The doctor marched, head erect, to the stand, and selected with apparent care a rifle of great length and weight from a number of different sizes. Satisfied with his choice, he faced towards the assembly, and bowing, said: "Fair ladies, I rely on this good weapon and your favor to do my *devoir* before this goodly company; aid me, then, with a little invocation to your favorite saints." Having received by acclamation the best wishes of the fair ones, expressed in tones of approval and general merriment, he placed his rifle upon a pin which his ambition rather than his judgment had induced him to select. He perceived at once his error, but too proud to retract his assumption, the little gentleman raised himself on tiptoe, and brought into play every inch of extension he was master of before he could bring the barrel of his piece to bear upon the object. After a long and breathless aim, during which all present partook more or less of his anxiety, the rifle's flash was seen, and a bright ribbon that came sailing down from the neck of the bird was greeted with a shout of approbation that concealed some effort to suppress a smile, and proclaimed the success of the gallant surgeon. Several attendants ran to secure the silken streamer, which was brought in triumph to the stand. M. De La Rue came forward, and complimented the doctor on his skill, and conducted him to the presence of the assemblage of ladies, where the fortunate possessor of the fine streamer presented his token for a claimant. It was at length acknowledged by a blooming widow, and the little man's happiness was "*au comble*" by the possession of her hand for the first dance. The youth, who followed the surgeon, cut down his ribbon, and was made happy by the allotment of a pretty-faced damsel as his partner. A young Spaniard now came up, and, as he took a rifle in hand, declared his intention to bring down the white ostrich plume which adorned the head of the bird; he made a *snap-shot*, and his ball struck the cock's bill, within half an inch of the stem of the feather. The shock sent the bird whirling round upon the iron rod, until, losing its velocity, it stopped directly facing the company. The dark brow of the young man was contracted, and a shade of disappointment passed over his face as he turned from the mark and brought the butt of his rifle down with a vigorous arm unintentionally upon the toes of one of the black attendants, who acknowledged the favor with a cry that resounded through the arbor. The young Spaniard felt the regards of all present turned upon him, and galled by the scrutiny, moved off haughtily into the centre of the crowd.

Immediately after this, Ferdinand Oreo, who was standing in front of a very lovely girl, Rose Vermiel, whose favor, it was understood, he had for some time assiduously sought, was called to the stand. He bowed, as he left his lady-love with a fixedness of purpose on his countenance that seemed to indicate the feeling that on his coolness and dexterity depended his obtaining for the contra-dance the hand of the sweet girl who had given the plume. Now, Ferdinand, my friend, hand and eye, nerve and temper, must work together!—no little dexterity is necessary to cut the shaft of an ostrich feather at sixty yards, and more particularly as the feather now stands with its broad face to the front, making the shot more difficult owing to the wide surface presented, and the indistinctness of the stem it was necessary to cut to bring the feather to the ground. Choosing a smooth, level spot for his feet, he examined the priming, and set the trigger of his piece. His right shoulder was thrown a little back, and his straight, slender figure and well-rounded limbs showed to advantage in the attitude he assumed. He brought the breech of the rifle to his shoulder, and the muzzle rose quickly from the foot of the flag-staff to the object on its summit; then, without an instant's pause, the red flame burst forth, the sharp *crack* rang through the bower, and the white plume, *darting* up from its resting-place, descended with a quick, spiral motion to the ground; the bullet grazing the comb of the warrior-bird, had cut the very thread that bound to his head this much-envied ornament. A general shout of delight signified the satisfaction of the spectators. The son of our hostess, a boy of eight years, *darted* forward and brought the plume. Ferdinand received it hurriedly, and, hastening past the admiring eyes of a host of damsels, presented his claim which was at once acceded to.

The sport went on, with more or less mirth and spirit, as the aspirants for fame were successful or disappointed in obtaining partners to their liking. Indeed, by the time each gallant had fired his shot, the naked and battered body of the Patgo was all that remained on the staff.

The object now was to knock down the shapeless block, which entitled the one who accomplished this *feat* to the title of "*King*" elect, and host of the next Patgo.

Antonio Collin, the father of two of the loveliest girls present, was the aspirant to this dignity. He enlisted a number of young men in his cause, and the discharge of fire-arms, as the party approached nearer and nearer to the mark, became incessant; till, drawing quite close, the fire ceased, and Antonio Collin, advancing almost to the foot of the staff, by the discharge of a single shot brought the mangled object to the earth. He was at once declared King elect.

The first act of the Patgo being now ended, the party returned to the house. Dinner was now announced; and soon after the party rose from the table, the band on the piazza playing a lively air, invited the lovers of the dance to lead out their partners. It was not long before couple after couple joined in the most easy and graceful of all dances. The amusement was kept up with little intermission until the sun was disappearing below the western horizon, when the entertainment terminated with a general waltz. The day of the Patgo was past; the guests prepared to depart. Saddle-horses and vehicles of all descriptions were soon brought forth.

The boats were manned, and ladies fair, and gallant gentlemen, took leave of their kind host and his charming wife, and turned their faces towards home. The full moon, for whose welcome approach the day had been selected, rose as the sun went down. Not a cloud was in the clear atmosphere, and as we "*shoved off*" from the wharf, the ladies of several boats united their voices in a Spanish chant, which swelled over the water with a soothing softness that lent a charm to the hour.

Song after song enlivened the voyage, and having safely landed in front of Pensacola, many expressions of the pleasures of the day were interchanged with the ladies as we left them at home.

PENSACOLA, December 1, 1822.

MY DEAR H——: I am mounted at last—and splendidly. I found here a short time past a blooded mare from Virginia; she was brought hither through Tennessee and Alabama by a Mr. Anderson, a gentleman who came to look at Florida lands and live-oak timber. Kate, as I have christened her, is a dark bay, almost a brown, with the most beautiful head, saucily set upon a fine neck, which springs proudly from a deep and well thrown-back shoulder; a short back, fiddle hips, and a clean set of limbs finish the portrait. She has a fair share of woman's wilfulness; but that is amply illuminated or adorned by a light pair of heels and great powers of endurance. I have ridden her after the hounds several times. Last week we had a teasing hunt, and by hard riding ran down and killed a fine buck, although he crossed the bayou, through swamp and bog, twice. This of course threw us out, and compelled us to seek crossing-places at some distance—to recover which and again come up with the dogs, required hard riding.

It was a party made up by Captain Bell of the 4th; a gallant fellow, in the prime of early manhood, of a solid and strong constitution of body, a fearless rider, devoted to the sports of the field, as it were with him "the day's reflection and the midnight dream;" a man after my own heart, being not only a lover of the chase, but an accomplished gentleman; but I must give you some description of the others who composed the party. First, there was Lieut. Lewis, a thoughtless, rattle-brained youth, but a good rider; next there was Ferdinand Oreo, to whom I have already introduced you. He had brought with him a person who could not well come under the denomination I have used in reference to those I have already named, however much he might, from frequent association with Ferdinand, have aspired to it. Diego Rojo was in fact a person of very questionable standing; an owner of cattle; and from his knowledge of the woods and woods' craft a successful hunter, he was frequently the companion of the former, who was himself rather fond of the chase. With your humble servant, these composed the party.

The day appointed for the hunt was an uncommon one for the time of year, though not the less welcome than unexpected. The rarefied and vaporous atmosphere so oppressive during the long and sultry summer of a southern clime, was cooled and condensed by the first frost of the season, which spell-like seemed to exercise its magic influence equally, though with contrary effect, on all animate and inanimate nature, at once striking the tender flower drooping to the earth, and instilling new life and vigor to the languid and weakened frame of man. The sun was just rising as Ferdinand and his companion rode up to Capt. Bell's quarters, where the horses were collected, and where breakfast was prepared for the party.

The duties of the table being despatched, our party came forth and found old Jupiter, a French negro, Bell's hostler, mounted and in charge of the horses and dogs; his copper-colored face glistening with delight in anticipation of the sport. In a moment Bell was on the back of his snow-white mare, a beautiful animal, brought to Florida by the gentleman who brought also my mare "Kate;" indeed the two animals are half-sisters.

"*Fancy*" is in truth perfect—as gentle and docile, as delicate and beautiful, she wheeled with graceful motion and springy tread at the slightest touch of the single snaffle rein; her saddle was light and simple, neither covering up nor reaching to the fine loin and haunch which distinguish the high-bred courser. from the cold-blooded drudge. Lieut. Lewis rode a strong roan horse of great bone, and with a bob-tail; as he mounted he said laughing, "He that rides with me to-day may look for rough riding." Ferdinand was well mounted on a heavy bay. As I have already described to you my own gay Kate, it only remains to give you a pencil sketch of Diego and his steed to complete the picture of the goodly group. This man was a thin, shrivelled Spaniard of medium height; his sallow visage was neatly garnished with a slight jet-black moustache that curled upwards on either side of his hooked nose; his eyes were small, black and sunken, and at times shot out a gleam of fire that roused an involuntary feeling of dislike or aversion in the person upon whom they were suddenly darted and instantly withdrawn, —eyes that were constantly in motion and restless as the caged hyena's.

So incessant a smoker was he that his lips were seldom without the paper *cigarretto*, from which one would have been led to imagine he derived his only sustenance from the noxious weed, had not the dried-up and bloodless appearance of his face and limbs proclaimed the contrary. He looked, in fact, to be as thoroughly and essentially smoke-dried as a red herring, and not altogether unlike one in appearance. Unsocial in temper, he passed much of his time, when not upon a fishing expedition, at home with the quadroon with whom he lived as it were in wedlock. His dwelling was at the head of a sequestered cove of the bay, some distance below the town, and shut off from it by a marsh, through which a spring branch of fresh water trickled past his door amidst a thicket of brambles and vines. At intervals, he would not make his appearance in Pensacola for months at a time; and then, if met by accident in the woods, his horse and gun were his only companions, and the care of his cattle, as he would say, his only employment; and this was in fact his only ostensible business. His habits and his retiring manner did not fail to bring him under suspicion with some of the people of the town, but nothing could be adduced to authorize distrust; and Diego disregarded whatever might have given offence to one of more susceptibleness than himself. Ferdinand had however, by a kindly and familiar treatment in the field, gained a hold upon the Spaniard's affections which no one else possessed.

Diego, when all were mounted and ready to set out, appeared to be with much self-complaisance smoothing and arranging the forelock of his pretty bay pony neatly under the browband of his bridle. "*Amado*," as his master called him, was not stout and scrubby like most ponies, but rather lightly than heavily made, and of remarkably fine proportions; a full flowing mane hung on the right side of his arched and polished neck; but Nature, so bountiful to Amado in other respects, had sportively or in derision denied him the ornamental and useful appendage of a full and flowing tail.

The few, long, straggling hairs which that member disported, gave an odd and rather ludicrous finish to his otherwise trim appearance. But when, as the party set out, the deep-mouthed tones of exultation of the hounds filled the air, Amado curled his rat-tail on high, and bounding from the earth, stood erect, pawing the air with his forefeet, and displaying the finest limbs and boldest action imaginable. "Down, Amado," said his master; and at the word, the "*Darling*," with an angry and spiteful shake of the head, resumed his position, but continued to bite the bit, and ever and anon to hazard a kick at any of the dogs that were imprudent enough to come within his reach. As we moved forward, old Jupiter, with his long whip and silver-mounted horn, brought up the rear with his canine troop. Bell's best dogs were, Bluetail, Bellona, and "*Old Enoch*," as he was always called. The latter's name had originally been "*Ranger*," but having been emasculated — for what reason I know not — was one day on the parade-ground with his master, about to take the field, when Captain N——, an odd character, coming by and addressing Bell, said, —

"Why, Captain, that dog's an *Enoch*," — meaning a eunuch.

The thing took, and ever after poor Ranger went by the name of "*Old Enoch*."

We mustered to-day eight dogs. They are "fox-hounds;" faster dogs are not preferred; they run the deer out of the range in a short time; and the country around being much cut up with bayous and swamps, it is impossible for the riders to keep with the dogs; whereas the deer will play before the slower dogs, and afford opportunities for the horsemen to gain stands where it is known the deer will pass, and where the hunter is sure of his shot.

We moved on through the woods, where the long-leaved pine, sparsely distributed, towers up among the red and the white palmetto. As we rode along slowly, the dogs beating about quietly in front, seeking for the "*trail*" of a deer, Captain Bell said to me, —

"As you have not hunted yet in this region, I will point out to you in the distance the country that is to be the theatre of your exploits to-day. Look through that almost open avenue, — there, a little to the right, you see a line of heavy, dark-green timber resembling a wall, and stretching away to the northwest as far as the eye can reach: it is the hummock of Live-oak and Bay-galls that borders the bayou and conceals it; but, at the same time, marks its course. Here, to the left, as far as we can see, the country is flat and open, and towards its mouth the bayou is nearly a mile wide, and its clear waters are margined with a beach of the purest white sand, interspersed with conical sand-hills; but, as you ascend the stream again, the land gradually rises into pine ridges, the loose, sandy soil of which my little mare has reason to remember, for, some days ago, we had a killing race over it; and, should the deer carry us in that direction to-day, you will have use for your spurs, I assure you. Or if he shape his course down-stream, you may again find their service necessary in the wet lowlands."

Thus chatting, we passed through the patches of knotty "black-jacks," whose leaves were touched with a thousand hues of green, red, brown, and yellow, that gave a sombrous wildness to the scenery, the effect of which was increased by the dull murmur of the breeze sighing through the pine-tops. The distant sound of our approach drove the startled fawn from its grassy bed, and it might be seen afar off at intervals as it bounded above the grass and palmettos.

At length we came upon the hunting-ground, and Jupiter was ordered with the pack "*to drive*" a branch or arm of the bayou that shot out from the main body of the hummock. The old black, plying his armed heel against the flanks of his stout hack, made his way resolutely through vines, briers, and various impediments that opposed his advance, and finally forcing a passage into the impenetrable-looking underbrush, was lost to sight, though his progress was still denoted by his shouts of encouragement to the dogs. Jupiter had not advanced far before a single note, low, deep-toned, and prolonged, brought glad tidings and true to the ears of his master.

"Hark to him!" cried the Captain. "Listen to old Enoch; that was his voice, and it is a voice that never deceives. He has struck a '*cold trail,*' and carefully and truly will the old fellow follow it. Hark again! another note; he will soon track the deer to his lair, and rouse him from his noon-day repose. We must separate, and be ready for him when the dogs force him from cover."

Old Enoch continued his course slowly and accurately, from time to time giving notice of his progress; when all at once the whole pack, bursting into full cry, proclaimed that the deer was up. Each horseman concealed himself and horse as much as possible behind a tree or bush, and waited in silence and anxious expectancy for the moment when the deer, on being closely pressed, should leave the hummock. In a few minutes, however, Bell, having listened attentively to the cry, put spurs to his mare, and dashed down the branch to its junction with the bayou, and throwing the reins on his mare's neck, sat loosely in the saddle, coolly awaiting the approach of the chase, prepared to deliver his fire at the first bound of the deer from cover. His judgment proved to be correct: the boisterous cry of the pack passed, successively, each of the disappointed hunters stationed above; but as the deer approached the junction, he caught the wind of his enemy, and declined to leave the cover; and the cry of the pack soon proved that he had directed his flight up the main bayou. As Bell rode back, he called out,—

"This fellow is disposed to breathe our horses. We are entered for a good mile race by this manœuvre. The '*stand*' is the first cove above this branch; if we let him pass that, he is safe for the day. Come on."

An animated whoop started us at full speed, and in another moment we were sweeping through the rattling palmettos with the sound of a hurricane. In order to gain the "*stand*" indicated by the Captain, we were obliged to double the branch or arm of the hummock in which the deer had been started; so that, although we had the advantage of a more open country, we had to perform more than double the distance required of the deer to place him beyond further pursuit. The horses, however, were fresh, and as, open-mouthed, they drew near the cove, the pack was coming up in full cry towards us. Stands were taken as the judgment of the individual dictated, and scarcely were we disposed of, ere the chase came thundering on. Again we were disappointed; the deer, having approached to the very edge of the hummock, again caught the wind of his pursuers, and doubling back, returned in the same trail he had advanced upon.

"An old buck, I'll be sworn," cried Diego; "but we'll have him yet, in spite of all his cunning."

At this moment, Lieutenant Lewis, who had pulled up at the first stand on the "cove," as the broad, semicircular recess of the hummock was called, necessarily had the lead, when we turned to follow the chase on the back track by at least two or three hundred yards. This advantage he seemed resolved to maintain; and he was, in fact, still foremost in the race when we again drew near the ground where the deer was started; but before he reached that point, the chase, a noble buck, which since the last dodge had strained every nerve to elude his pursuers and make good his escape, came bounding and crashing through the dry palmettos at a distance of a few hundred yards in front of the Lieutenant. Diego, who was next in advance, shouted to him, —

"Cut him off, or we lose him!"

Lewis gallantly dashed spurs into his horse's flanks and bore a little to the left, for the deer was running in a direction to cross his path in front. Trees, logs, and snags all vanished from his sight; he saw nothing but the majestic buck, and he determined to turn him at all hazards. He had already overcome two-thirds of the distance to the point at which the line of his own desperate course intersected that of the deer, and it was scarcely doubtful whether he would succeed in his object; for the buck, whose attention was engrossed by the cry of the hounds in his rear, and moreover was purblind from hard running, evidently did not see the Lieutenant, who was bent on cutting off his retreat. Lewis' eye was on the deer, and he was just preparing for a tremendous shout to proclaim his success, when directly in his path lay an open patch some twenty yards in diameter, devoid of grass, but beautifully covered with a coat of green mould, which his horse seemed much inclined to avoid; but the Lieutenant's eyes were riveted on the deer, and spurring passionately he drove his horse forward, and the next instant was plunged into a quick-sand bog. At the first leap the horse sunk to his shoulders, his head was buried in the mire, and he rolled over on his side. The rider had at the same time been thrown over the horse's head and lay stretched upon the moss-covered bog, while his gun projected beyond himself, and striking on its muzzle, stood erect and quivering within a few feet of the buck, which was in the act of passing just beyond the far side of the bog. The latter, unaccustomed to feats of flying vaulting, was as completely astounded as if a thunderbolt had fallen at his feet, nor could that indeed have checked his course more abruptly. For a moment he stood as if paralyzed, gazing on the scene, then wheeling with a wild snort, dashed back to the cover from which he had just emerged. We came up in time to assist in extricating the gallant Lieutenant from his awkward predicament.

The pack came dashing out above almost as the buck went in again to the hummock below: they circled round where the deer had doubled, and without for a moment faltering followed him back again. The cry of the pack soon told that the buck as he regained the cover had dashed through to the banks of the bayou, where plunging in he swum the stream and hied him off to the northward.

"Gentlemen," said Diego, "the deer has 'taken water,' and the dogs are pushing him bravely on the other side of the bayou; we must not sit here idle. The wind is northerly; he will continue his course up the western arm of the bayou to its source, and then strike off for the Perdido; we must take the main ridge between the forks, and with good riding we shall meet him at the head of the west branch."—"Forward then," said Capt. Bell; and the next moment we were dashing on as furiously as before. We were compelled to descend the stream some distance to gain a ford, Diego being our guide. On reaching the ford, the latter led the way across.—"It will be touch and go with your pony, here," said Ferdinand to Diego: "head up well, or you may miss the landing."

"Never fear for me, Señor," replied the other; "Amado has crossed Bayou Grande too often to require assistance at any point. Nor do I admit that he has a superior on rough and difficult ground; but when we reach the open ridge, Señor Fernando, you must put your horse to the top of his mettle (for there I admit your superiority), and if the deer is not killed there, he will bid us *adieu*."

On gaining the opposite bank, we struck off nearly at right angles to the direction in which the dogs were heard. This was necessary to get at once upon the ridge which would carry us almost in a right line to the head-waters of the branch above mentioned; while the route pursued by the deer in following the circuitous course of the stream would not only be much longer but also prove more difficult. A gallop of half a mile through the low scrub brought us to the dividing ridge where the fair trial of the speed and bottom of the different horses must come off. We stopped a moment to listen for the dogs, but they were quite out of hearing. Ferdinand was well mounted and a good rider; and he boldly took the lead. Throwing his gun across his right shoulder, he gave the whoop and spurred on at a furious speed. Capt. Bell was at his side in a moment, Lewis and I followed, soon leaving Diego. The foremost horsemen bravely cleared every obstacle that met them. Not knowing the country, I was content to keep within pistol-shot of them, and Lewis' horse was unable to do more. The distance we had now to accomplish was nearly three miles; but the undergrowth was grass and the timber sparse; the riding was therefore much better, as the land was a dry and firm sand. Ferdinand maintained his position by the side of the white mare for the first mile; but then the latter proved the superiority of her blood, and after a short struggle for the mastery, took the lead. The Captain apparently felt that he must put Fancy to her trumps to gain the stand in time to meet the deer, for we had not come within hearing of the chase as yet.

And lightly did the noble animal carry her rider over log and snag, taking the most trying leaps without hesitation. Indeed, the beautiful creature that a little while before had seemed all gentleness and docility, and to an unpractised eye would have appeared too slightly formed for such work, was now all fire and vehemence. Bell evidently gave her the rein, and with his heel guiding her among the scattered pines through which she seemed to fly with an ease and confidence that by one unaccustomed to such sport would have been regarded with astonishment, he suffered her to choose her own way as far as possible. Thus the second mile was passed; and Kate was now second in the race, which was continued with unabated ardor; still no clamor of the pack was heard.

The ridge was soon more thickly clad with the palmetto and black-jack, and our view was confined to a few yards in front and on either hand. On a sudden, however, I saw both Fancy and my own Kate raise inquiringly their ears,—for Kate was not content to remain behind, and had by this time come up alongside of Fancy,—and in a moment after lay them back close to their necks, and lunge forward as if inspired with new spirit. Onward they swept together mercilessly,* clearing their way through the interlocked branches of the tough black-jacks, and soon to our joy we heard the faint notes of the distant pack, which was now approaching the head of the bayou, in a direction converging to that in which we were advancing.

A few hundred yards farther brought us through the thicket, and we at once came upon a large savannah, or grassy pond, in which the bayou took its rise. The country was now perfectly open and admirable for the horses, and they carried us gayly along the margin of the savannah, the head of which was half a mile beyond where we entered upon it; and the "*stand*," a regular defile through which the deer invariably passed in crossing over to the waters of the Perdido, was another half mile beyond the head of the savannah.

When we entered upon the opening, Bell cast his eye down the bayou and discovered the buck coming up on the opposite side of the savannah, steadily pursued by the dogs, (though at some distance,) whence they sent forward the intelligence of their coming in deep-toned and eager cries. The poor buck, nearly exhausted with the long and uninterrupted run, is laboring under the weight of his branching antlers; his parched tongue lolls from his husky throat; his heart is bursting, and with his ebbing breath

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* Any one who has ridden at top speed through the black-jacks of Florida, will comprehend the sense in which I use the word. The usual result is a pair of lower limbs, black, blue, and red all over. Nothing but buckskin will stand it. I once came in at the end of a deer-chase through the black-jacks, with my corduroys absolutely in ribbands; and two of my friends had to ride close on each side of me, in order to get me fairly through the streets of Pensacola to the hotel, where I procured a refit.

> "He curses his conspiring feet, whose scent
> Betrays that safety which their swiftness lent."

The Captain, at a glance, perceived his condition, but did not stop to moralize. He called out to me,—

"We can take him as he passes the head of the pond."

Again putting spur to our horses, we gained the head of the savannah in advance of him. On reaching the savannah, the buck had been compelled to leave the wind, the only medium through which he receives warning of danger in front; for when hotly pursued, his eyesight soon fails him, and his ears are filled with the fearful cry of the hounds in his rear. It followed, then, that when we drew up at the distance of some two hundred yards in his front, he continued his course, unconscious of our presence. The Captain whispered,—

"The first shot is yours;—fire."

I drew up my piece, and fired; but the excitement of the chase, and the fatigue of my bridle-arm, caused my aim to be unsteady, and my bullet cut the leaves from the bushes above his head.

The buck sprang forward at the report, and redoubled his efforts. The white mare now stood statue-like, with ears erect and eyes fixed upon the noble deer still advancing; and before the fated patriarch of the wilds had made two leaps, the Captain's piece rang forth his death-knell. The buck made one tremendous leap; staggered forward a few yards in quick, irregular plunges; recovered himself; and then, expending the remaining energies of vitality in one majestic bound, fell lifeless on the plain.

In a short time the wild shout of our friends, now arrived on the ground, was at once the plaudit of the victor and the requiem of the slain. The dogs too, coming up upon the trail, but little blown by their long and fatiguing run, soon caught the scent of blood, and, with erected tails and bristling hair, rushed forward and crowded upon their victim. And now, old Jupiter, a notorious hard rider, who had followed the chase sufficiently to keep always within hearing of the dogs, came, whipping and spurring, upon the scene, and springing at once from his horse, took hold of the deer, and, with a joyous and inimitable burst of laughter, exclaimed, —

"You make good shot this time, Massa Captain; your bullet take him here, between the neck and right shoulder, and come out through the ribs on t'other side!"

We now dismounted to let our horses breathe, while all present collected around the deer to admire his great length of body, his broad loin, and his fine limbs. Then, seated upon the grass, a cigar was soon lighted, and the excitement produced by the chase was soothed and allayed by the magic power of the Indian weed. By the time we had finished our cigars, the deer had been bestowed "*à la croupiere de vieux Jupiter*," and we proceeded slowly on our way homeward.

P. S.—If you, dear H——, have not found this long deer-hunt rather "*de trop*," I may, by-and-by, give you some other sketches of life in Florida. Adieu.

CANTONMENT CLINCH, December 1, 1822.

MY DEAR H——: Thanks for your letter of the 25th. The favor with which mine are received, as well as the anticipation of the bright returns they bring, induces me to continue the sketches of this indolent and pleasure-loving people amongst whom the initiation of my military career has fallen. Indeed, the change of life from the discipline of the Military Academy to the light garrison duty here required of us, tempered by a moderate indulgence of fun and frolic to fill up the vacant hours, has made the past two months a regular holiday. I have much to tell you; but I think I must begin with a very pleasant evening party I was at last week. This was an entertainment called a "Bouquet Ball." And what is a "Bouquet Ball?" you will ask. I will tell you. It is an entertainment given now and then by a single gentleman in return for the hospitalities in general, and more particularly the dancing parties of the matrons and leaders of society.

The gentleman at whose expense the ball is given, is, with the usual consideration still entertained by the old Spanish and French families for rank and position, entitled "*King;*" and the lady who consents to share his honors on the occasion, is duly invested with the equally gratifying appellation of "*Queen.*" In the course of the evening the Queen presents a bouquet of flowers to some one of the bachelors present, and then it is that, as she, at a certain appointed time during the festivities, prepares to discharge this her privilege and pleasing ceremonial, the heart of many a youthful aspirant beats high in hope and expectation, and the diaphragms of certain old bachelors, whose ruling passion is gradually sliding from ostentation into avarice, are being agitated by less agreeable sensations.

The last victim to this arbitrary custom was an Englishman, who had been long established as a merchant on Palafox Street, and who had also passed that period when the tender passion and kindred sympathies of man prompt to matrimonial alliances. Nevertheless, he had been fairly entrapped by a *coterie* of merry Creoles, as I am told, and being committed to the measure, had boldly challenged the fairest and gayest young widow of Pensacola to share his honors on the inevitable occasion.

In their social intercourse, no pleasure presents greater allurements to the inhabitants of this fair town than a hearty observance of the rites of Terpsichory. Nor, on such occasions as this, is there observed a very strict distinction of classes. In the intercourse of every-day life, the wealthy and intelligent were, of course, the more important personages, and some few families of this class resolutely maintained an aristocratic superiority; but on the occurrence of a *fête* like the present, when a general exhibition of beauty and taste is looked for, they meet on terms of easy and good-humored familiarity. They, one and all, dress with simplicity and good taste; and as the least wealthy are, as well as their superiors, remarkable for a native grace and dignity of carriage and manner rarely to be met with elsewhere, except among the educated and refined classes, it would not be an easy matter for a stranger in one of these assemblies to distinguish, by their air or general appearance, the proud patrician from the scarcely less polished plebeian.

Although to the *King*, as the host is called, these entertainments are attended with a degree of inconvenience and trouble not altogether suited to the tastes and habits of our friend Mr. Norton, yet, being a man somewhat addicted to pomposity and display, he designed that the *divertisement*, with which he proposed to regale the good people of Pensacola, should be distinguished for a magnificence unknown in the history of "Bouquet Balls." He also contemplated the delight he should himself experience, and the envy he should infallibly create, in leading the voluptuous Madame La Fleur, in the character of Queen, through the mazes of the Spanish dances; and in a momentary fit of liberality, or rather extravagance, gave orders that no pains or expense should be spared in the preparations. Invitations were extended to every family where there was a pretty face. Nor were the dark-eyed Creoles less excited in anticipation of the display promised them by Mr.

Norton, who made no secret of the willingness with which he submitted to the task of superintending and directing the arrangements.

The long looked-for evening at length arrived: the company was assembled in the spacious ball-room of the "Hotel d'Espagne," which was brilliantly lighted and gayly decorated. The music had for some time been discoursing its most enticing airs, and the lovers of the dance were becoming impatient for the appearance of their majesties, who were, of course, to open the ball. When, at last, they entered the room, the music sounded a march, and the company advanced to greet them, while such expressions as, "See, they come!" "How lovely she looks!" floated round. Mr. Norton moved through the room with measured step and consequential air, bowing right and left in the most grave and condescending manner; while the graceful La Fleur hung languishingly on his arm, and, with the most bewitching smiles, returned the salutations of her numerous friends and admirers.

The arrival of the distinguished personages was the signal for the joyous work upon which the young and gay were all equally eager to enter; so that the call to the gentlemen to lead out their partners was immediately complied with. The *King* and *Queen*, of course, occupied the most conspicuous position in the dance, on the right of the Spanish contra-dance. The music, measured and slow, commenced; the queen began the figure. She glided through the intricacies of the dance with a light step, to which the movements of her matchless figure (full but not over-grown) conformed with facility and grace. I could not but concede to her the charm of combining with feminine dignity the seducing languor of the queen of love. This dance, uniting the beauties of the minuet with those of the waltz, is unrivalled in the fine attitudes and chaste movements its peculiar figures are calculated to exhibit.

These Creoles understand it well: their ear for time is so good, their movements so perfectly exact, that, as they seem to float through the dance, their lovely figures might be likened to the heavenly bodies moving in circles and elipses through the solar system, without ever interfering one with onother.

As La Fleur and her partner — for Norton had lived long enough in Pensacola to be an adept — slowly passed down the long alley of smiling damsels and gallant men, lingering in the exchange of partners and interchange of courtesies with each succeeding couple as they went, her animated and glowing countenance showed that every thought was absorbed, and that her ardent soul was revelling in the delight which fine music and the brilliant scene around was calculated to inspire. I could not but pay her the homage of my admiration, although I knew her to be totally without the education of the schools, which we of the North consider so absolutely essential to the development of the character and refinement of our women.

I joined in the next dance with the fair Carlota, the sister of Ferdinand, — a lady-like girl, who had had the advantage of such book-learning as the reverend and excellent Father Pierre had been able to communicate to her. Otherwise, she is gentle, lively, and fond of the dance. As I accompanied her to a seat, I espied Lieut. Lewis in conversation with Dr. Coburn. I divined, as a matter of certainty, that some fun was brewing, and I joined them as soon as politeness allowed me to leave Carlota to the care of the gentleman who had asked her hand for the waltz, at that moment called for.

The wild, laughter-loving Lieutenant had just met the Surgeon, in whose eccentricities he found an inexhaustible fund of amusement, at the same time that he admired, respected, and loved the Doctor for his many sterling qualities.

"Why, Doctor," said Lewis, arguing a point with his friend as I came up, "you carry all before you."

The Doctor was at the moment shaking the folds from a cambric handkerchief, which he applied to his forehead to remove the traces of too manifest exertion in the last dance.

"Why, Doctor, I must inform you the ladies consider you one of the most active men on the floor —"

"I'm your obedient servant," returned the other; "but, Lieutenant, you must not mistake me. I dance simply for amusement, and because the exercise produces a healthful action on my skin. I am regardless of opinion, and study not the graces which you affect."

"Our success in any undertaking," replied the Lieutenant, bowing low to conceal his countenance, "depends more or less upon the zeal with which our efforts are made. But, come, Doctor," said the Lieutenant, as the music in measured cadence called the lovers of the waltz to the floor, "a man of your skill and gallantry must not be idle. Numbers of languishing black eyes are already turned upon you. Come, let us take partners; there are two ladies whose looks seem to challenge us."

So saying, he took the little Doctor by the arm, and moved in the direction he had indicated. Lewis made his bow to the ladies, and unceremoniously secured the prettiest of the two for himself; while the Surgeon, who had followed doubtingly, or rather had been dragged along by his friend, found himself under the necessity of offering his hand to the other, who happened to be a tall, dignified señorita, that stood, when she left her seat, a full head and shoulders above the Doctor. The room was already inscribed with a circle of whirling couples in the various attitudes of "*dégagé*," "*dos-a-dos*," *et cetera*, but, at the same time, avoiding, by the skilful ease and regularity of their movements, all collision or interference with each other.

As I followed with my eye the progress of this ill-sorted couple, I could not but condemn the conduct of the Lieutenant in forcing the worthy Surgeon into such a scrape; for, whilst his partner was moving with the stateliness of a Minerva, the pursy little gentleman was flying round her at arm's length, and vainly striving, in the rapidity of his revolutions, to regulate or control his steps. At every turn one unruly leg would fly out behind like unto a puppet whose wires were deranged. In fact, the limb was unmanageable, and it seemed beyond the power of the Doctor to bring it to the floor. It was evident that the señorita was not a little annoyed by the consciousness that the attention of the lookers-on was directed towards her partner. The latter, however, was too much occupied to make observations, and, with the spirit of a game chicken, he persevered until the music ceased.

In a little while, my attention was attracted to a cotillon in front of me, where Madame La Fleur was executing a pirouet with surpassing elegance. These women, my dear H——, were created with physical endowments of the highest order, compensating for, I might almost say, more than compensating for their want of the mental. Yet, I will not assert, either, that they are deficient in intellect, however much it may want development. They are, at all events, gentle and amiable.

In a short time the band played a *march*, announcing supper. The entertainment was profuse. The table was loaded with every delicacy; the guests in great good-humor. The thing was, in fact, a perfect success, and did credit to the liberality of our friend Norton.

The time for the presentation of the bouquet to the fortunate gentleman upon whom Mad. La Fleur might decide to confer that honor, was to be, according to long-established rule, immediately after the guests returned from the supper-table to the ball-room. A march was played as the company filed through the entrance, and dispersed around within the walls of the long saloon; the question with all being, "Who is to get the bouquet?" for La Fleur had been mysteriously silent on the subject.

There is, I must let you know, a Scotch gentleman here, a merchant, reputed rich, but extremely penurious, who must be arranged in the class of old bachelors, Roderick VicAlpin by name; who, I am told, was never known to decline an invitation to an evening or a dinner-party, or to extend an invitation of a similar character to any one, young or old, in Pensacola. He had been threatened with the bouquet more than once by the ladies, it is said; but inevitably vanished between the moment of leaving the supper-table and that of entering the ball-room, although the rooms were adjoining, and had but one door of communication between them. On this occasion, some of the mischievous señoritas had plotted to entrap the old gentleman; and having gained Mad. La Fleur's promise to present him with the fatal token if they could produce him bodily, they succeeded in inducing some of their devoted señors to lock the doors before supper was over. The consequence was, that after the company had all made their way into the ball-room, and Mad. La Fleur, leaning on the arm of the self-satisfied M. Norton, had made the detour of the room, she espied the hitherto invisible Don Roderick, as it were, cemented against the wall, being contracted within himself to a degree, that, had there been a sufficiently large augur-hole convenient, he would doubtless have vanished again. The lady passed him without notice, and moved on; but in another moment she turned suddenly, and before VicAlpin suspected the design, the dreaded bouquet was presented at his breast. Had it been a pistol, it would not have caused the stout heart of the old fellow half the agitation which did this pretty bunch of flowers. I happened to be standing near at the time; and it really gave me pain, however ludicrous the whole scene was, to witness the real agony of that man's feelings. His long jaw became longer as his under-lip fell; his long nose looked longer as his cheeks shrunk from it, and its natural twist to one side became more apparent as the blood left his face. A kind of hiccough was the only reply to the neat little speech of the blooming widow who stood before him. At last, summoning up his courage to meet a result that was now inevitable, he bowed low and extended his hand to receive the gift. The good-natured La Fleur, thereupon, in order to relieve his embarrassment, made a gracious bow, and with a little word of congratulation waved her hand and moved on.

A pervading feeling as of satisfaction that the old rogue was caught at last, seemed to fill the merry hearts of womankind; but a lively air, sounding from the little orchestra at that moment, called the attention of all the youthful lads and lasses to the business of the evening, and the remembrance of the incident was soon lost in the joyous mirth of the dance.

Somehow or other, Don Roderick soon made his escape with his bouquet. He made no attempt to secure the consent of any fair one to share with him the honors in store, probably from apprehension that he might meet with a rebuff. However that may be, he will have to pay the penalty, rest assured.

CANTONMENT CLINCH, January 6, 1823.

DEAR H——: Since my last to you, I have been frequently at the house of Ferdinand Oreo, and have seen a good deal of his mother and sister. They are well-bred; the former, mild but dignified; the latter, lively, natural, and unaffected. Late in the afternoon of yesterday, I strolled down the street towards the water, and seeing Ferdinand and the ladies on the piazza, I joined them. At that hour the view down the bay is grand. The bright sun had nearly run his daily course through a calm, clear sky, in which not a cloud had crossed his path, and now approached the long, lustrous line of the western horizon, to plunge, as it seemed, beneath the sea. The day had been sufficiently warm to make the return of evening agreeable; and it was one of those delicious evenings peculiar to the climate of Florida. There was that serenity in the heavens that lulls the mind, at the same time that the increasing elasticity of the land breeze cheers and exhilarates the spirits. The eye, too, worried by the dazzling glare of noon, found relief in wandering over the fading prospect. In front, across the broad bay, lay the Island of Santa Rosa, whose thick clumps of dark-green *Yapon-Bushes*, interspersed with snow-white sand-hills, already began to lose their distinctness in the mellow shades of twilight. On the left, far away, the Escambia, the Coldwater, Whitewater, Blackwater, and Yellow-water Rivers,—verily a rare assemblage of names,—with their host of tributaries, mingling their streams in two great estuaries, thence poured their united volume into the princely bay of Pensacola. As the last ray of the setting sun glanced over this scene, we observed a heavy, dingy-looking schooner, of no great burden, cast her anchor in front of the town. This was a fishing-smack returning from a cruise. She had doubled the extreme western promontory some hours before, and had slowly worked her way up the harbor. The sluggish craft was illy adapted, like others of her class, to contend with adverse winds; and as the lazy Creole loves best to glide over the waves with a full sail, it is rarely that any but a fair breeze fills his soiled canvas. Soon after the vessel was safely moored, a thin cloud of smoke, that rose in a spiral form from the caboose, showed that the crew were already preparing their evening meal. I have preferred, dear H, describing the scenery around us last evening, to relating the sallies of wit and lively discussions that passed between the ladies and myself, or the more edifying narratives of fishing and hunting adventures with which Ferdinand favored me. Before we parted, however, a riding party, to consist of Carlota and your humble servant, under the guidance and patronage of Ferdinand and Josephine, was arranged. I should have told you that I have recently participated in the pleasure of such excursions several times in company with *ma bonne amie* Carlota, who is a fearless equestrienne.

Eh bien! cela n'importe; but as we met with somewhat of an adventure in the course of our ride, I will tell you all about it precisely as it occurred. To begin.

Having called for the ladies, "Captain," said Carlota, (the ladies always give me that title,) "my brother is quite unwell to-day, and cannot leave his room; but Josephine and I are equipped and will accompany you; and, Captain, as you once promised to go with us to the mouth of le Bayou Grande, shall we not take that route to-day?"

"With pleasure," I answered; and at once we mounted and rode forth from the town in the road to the Barrancas, the site of the old Spanish fort. A joyous trio, we galloped briskly on the road leading through the plain clad with *black-jacks,* as the low-scrub-oaks are called, until we reached the hills covered with the long-leaved pine, only pausing to dwell for a moment on some wild landscape, or to gaze upon the extensive and dreary, or the more lively prospects that occasionally presented themselves to our view. An hour's canter or easy gallop brought us to the mouth of the bayou; where a still purer air than that of the pine-barrens met us on our approach to the sea. Arrived at this point, we came to a halt to breathe our horses, whilst the young ladies admired the brilliant scene to seaward, where the gently curling waves were glittering beneath a noonday sun. The bright eyes of my companions soon traced the low line of Santa Rosa Island to its extreme point, where for a limited space the Gulf of Mexico was open to view, and where "skies and seas the prospect only bound." After lingering here some time, we turned our horses' heads towards home; and I proposed to the ladies to follow the course of the beach for a mile or two, in order to vary the route before we turned again into the pine woods. We had not, however, proceeded more than half a mile, when, on passing round a high, thick clump of yapon-bushes, which projected from the forest nearly to the water's edge, and concealed a small plat of coarse, wiry grass, which here took the place of the almost omnipresent palmetto, we suddenly found ourselves in front of an Indian camp. A comely matron was seated upon a bear-skin in front of the tent, which was constructed of saplings so planted in the ground and united overhead as to form the figure of the sixteenth of a sphere, or, in other words, the front of the tent was open; the sides and back were rounded and thatched with palmetto-leaves. This temporary dwelling or hunting camp of a Creek Indian, was built under the spreading branches of a large live-oak, which towered in solitary grandeur above the surrounding growth of black-jacks and yapon. At a little distance to the right of the tent was a small scaffold upon which was laid a quantity of sliced "redfish," which was being cured by a smouldering fire beneath, aided by the sun's rays.

The Indian woman was still in the spring-time of life; her features were delicate, and the deep glow of health shone in a warm natural blush upon her tawny cheek. She was employed, at the moment our party rode up, in the dutiful task of mending a moccasin, which, as from its size it could never have graced her own little foot, no doubt appertained to the wardrobe of her lord and master. Near her, upon the bear-skin, was a child about a year old, whose only article of attire was a string of gay-colored glass beads about its neck; it was amusing itself and mother with the music of a rattle formed of a small gourd containing sundry dried beans.

The woman had apparently been aware of the approach of strangers,—of which the tread of our horses upon the sand had apprised her before we came in open view,—for when at once our party appeared in front of her, she quietly raised her eyes, and seemed at a glance to read the character of the strangers who stood before her, as doubtless she had correctly conjectured before she saw us, and then, with the habitual nonchalance of her race, she resumed her work. Not a muscle of her classic face (for her features were truly classical) had moved; and the next moment the closest observer could not have detected from her appearance a consciousness of the presence of her visitors.

Knowing that the Indians who visit Pensacola to sell their skins, and procure powder, lead, and other necessaries, are better acquainted with the Spanish language than either the French or English, I addressed her as we drew up our horses,—

"Buenos dias, Amiga."

She replied, "Stan-tose,"* in a smooth but slightly drawling tone, dwelling with a peculiar force upon the last syllable, at the same time raising her handsome and now expressive face with an inquiring look. There was a good-humored smile playing round her lips as she shook her finger significantly in front of her ear, to signify that she did not understand.

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* "I do not understand."

Perceiving that she did not comprehend me, and having no knowledge of the Mus-ko-ghe tongue, I was endeavoring by signs to propound the various questions which Carlota and Josephine were urging, when the sharp crack of a rifle was heard from the interior of a dense thicket, which, commencing at the distance of a hundred yards from the tent, stretched along the beach far away to the eastward. The report was followed by a shrill, piercing whoop. The woman was smiling and looking directly at me at the time; but quick as the lightning's flash, by that cry as by the wand of the powerful enchanter, Magrauby, she seemed to have been changed into a woman of stone. Her under jaw was so far dropped as just to part her lips; her eyes were fixed, and without expression; and every power and faculty for an instant seemed centred and absorbed in intense listening. I heard no further sound; but the woman evidently did, for at that moment she uttered a faint, scarcely audible exclamation, and springing to her feet with a bound, she turned her eyes in the direction of the thicket whence the report of the rifle had come. I turned in that direction, and beheld an Indian just breaking through the edge of the thicket.

He was bending forward, and dashed like a madman over the thick saw-palmettos.

"Fear nothing, ladies!" said I, reining my mare in front of them. Scarcely had I done so, when the Indian was at my side; but without noticing us, the savage darted into his tent.

In another instant he reappeared with his rifle and hunting-pouch. He spoke not, but with eyes rolling like the enraged tiger's, he shook the powder from his alligator-tooth charger into the muzzle of his rifle, and thrust his hand into the pouch for a ball. I marked the furious disappointment that darkened his lean visage as he ascertained that his last ball had been expended. As he drew forth his empty hand, a fearfully bitter exclamation burst from his compressed lips, and the useless gun dropped from his relaxed gripe upon the earth. Then a convulsive motion shook his athletic frame, and he buried his forehead in his open palms. His hunting-frock had fallen back from his shoulders, and as he leaned forward in the agony of frustrated revenge, I perceived a blue gunshot wound in the upper part of his shoulder, from which one large clot of dark coagulated blood hung upon his tawny skin. All this had passed with the rapidity of thought, and the Indian's wife had neither moved nor spoken. She had, however, at once comprehended the meaning of the war-whoop she had heard; she knew full well from its tone that the shot had been fired at her husband; she saw the friend and companion of happy days rush wounded into her presence; yet she asked no idle questions, but with the stern though calm self-command so remarkable in her people, awaited the issue. She saw her beloved bend forward and dash his burning forehead into his clasped hands, while the blood oozed from his wound, and shrunk not; yet the next instant, with a low, suppressed scream, she sprang in front of her husband, and clasping him in her arms, covered him with her own body. With her face turned over her shoulder, and with horror depicted in her countenance, her startled eyes were turned toward the thicket. I raised my eyes, and, to my utter astonishment, beheld a man at the edge of the thicket deliberately raise his rifle at the defenceless and almost naked beings at my side. It was a sight, dear H——, to thrill a heart of stone. I wish I could only describe it to you as I saw it; it would have roused all your manly sympathies. However, you know how rapidly our ideas pass through the mind in such a moment;—my heart had swelled with compassion for the poor children of the forest; but intense indignation at the conduct of the murderous wretch now filled my soul. Following the impulse of the moment, I dashed the spurs into my mare, and launched her directly at the fellow, with the view to ride him down.

"Villain!" I shouted, as he recoiled and sprang aside to avoid the shock; and the next instant, as I drew up my mare, who should stand revealed before me but Diego Rojo. "What! you here, Diego?" I exclaimed. "What fiend has prompted this?"

"Señor," replied the fellow, with perfect self-possession, "the Mus-ko-ghe is a wolf, and he shall die the death of a wolf!" and he turned again in the direction of the tent.

"If you raise your piece again," I added, "your life shall be the forfeit."

Diego started at the words, and turned fiercely towards me; but probably suspecting that I was armed, he lowered the breech of his gun, and with a subdued mien, and in a voice in which the expression of rage was still struggling with the respectful tone he endeavored to assume, said,—

"Señor, the savage Mus-ko-ghe has injured Diego, and the spirit of a Spaniard calls for vengeance; but," he continued, with more calmness, "for your sake, Diego Rojo foregoes his revenge and will let the dog live."

With these words, he turned towards the thicket from which he had emerged, and was about to depart. But I observed the glare of his eye, in spite of his efforts to smother his rage; and knowing that forbearance or a forgiving temper were scarcely to be numbered among the fellow's qualities, I apprehended the grudge would not easily be forgotten; and desirous withal to know the cause of the feud, I said in a conciliatory tone, as he turned away, —

"Allow me to ask you, Diego, who this Indian is, and how he has injured you?"

"The Mus-ko-ghe dog!" he muttered to himself, and then replied: "He comes from the Appalachicola, Señor, and for the last two years has passed the hunting season in this region. At the close of the season he disposes of his skins in Pensacola, or exchanges them for blankets and cloths, with which he loads his pack-horses, and returns to his own country. During his stay here, not satisfied with the wild meat of the forest, he must have a dainty calf whenever he fancies to indulge his wife's appetite. Not satisfied with this, he, last spring, drove off the fattest bullock of my herd; and I then swore, that, if we met again, my rifle should be the first to speak to him."

"But you must admit, Diego," I replied, "the possibility of some one else having driven off your bullock, if you have no proof; and you surely do not mean that the mere suspicion prompted you to so bloody a vengeance?"

"Señor," he returned, doggedly, "I found on a rail of the cattle-pen some of the wool of a new blanket I had sold him the day before, and which was strapped on his wife's back; and that was proof enough for me. It rained during the night, and I was unable to track them; and, for the first time since then, I saw yesterday his camp here. He was absent; but to-day I found him digging the coonta-root, and had he not stooped at the instant I pulled trigger, his account would have been settled."

Again I offered to plead hunger as the Indian's palliating excuse for the offence.

"No, Señor," he replied; "there are deer and turkeys in these woods for the killing; there are fish in the bay for the spearing; there is '*coonta*' to make bread for the digging; but, were this not the case, there is food everywhere in Florida on which an Indian may live where a wolf would starve; and yet I must pen cattle for the lazy hound. Ha! I believe I am fit to serve the basest Musko-ghe of them all, since I suffer it." While he spoke, his eye glared again and his countenance became pale with passion, but the next moment relapsed into an expression of dogged sullenness. "I take my leave of you, Señor," he added; and without waiting a reply, uttered his "*Adios*, Señor," and made his way into the thicket from which he had come.

When Diego thus unceremoniously made his retreat, I returned to the ladies, whom I had, without ceremony, so suddenly left on their horses in front of the wounded Indian's tent. In the meantime, these young ladies, having witnessed the stirring scene just described, fainted not! Whether it was that they had more self-possession and strength of mind than falls to the share of the generality of young ladies nowadays; or whether fainting is not in vogue with the fair Creoles of Pensacola; or whether, finally, they took into consideration that fainting on horseback, with no one to fly to their assistance but a wounded Indian and his half-distracted wife, might not prove to be as comfortable as fainting in an arm-chair, with devoted lovers at their feet and smelling-bottles on the centre-table, are points we must leave to the solution of the initiated. All I have to do is to state facts; and this I learned afterwards from Josephine, that, immediately after I left them, the Indian, overcome by the hurricane of his passions and the pain of his wound, fell senseless upon the ground, while his afflicted wife knelt over him and raised his head, which she moistened with her tears.

This pitiful sight so enlisted the sympathy of Carlota, that she quietly slid from her horse, and approaching the weeping female, endeavored to assuage the pangs of grief which seemed to be tearing her very heart-strings. She pressed into the young woman's hand her own cambric handkerchief, and urged her to stanch with it the blood now ebbing from the fountain of life. In this state I found affairs on my return. The Indian at length showed signs of returning animation; and first he turned one doating look upon his wife, then regaining his manly dignity, he drew himself up, and, offering me his hand, pronounced the word "*Amigo*," (friend,) in the Spanish, and added more in his own tongue which I did not understand.

I now, with the wife's assistance, examined the wound, and found that the ball had glanced upon the shoulder-blade, and passing over it to the front, had lodged under the skin between the neck and the collar-bone. When the nature of the wound was ascertained, the Indian drew his hunting-knife from his belt, and feeling for the ball, which protruded like a dark cherry beneath the skin, with his left hand he held it firmly between the thumb and forefinger, then, with the knife in his right hand, he, with unchanging countenance, made a slight incision at the proper place, and the ball, pressed forward, fell into his open hand. In the meantime the woman had gathered some leaves, which grew at hand, and, having chewed them, placed the mass on either orifice of the wound, and bound it up with Carlota's handkerchief, which the latter proffered for the purpose.

As the affair seemed now to be terminated, and I had, notwithstanding Diego's promise to me, some misgivings, I endeavored to communicate to them that their safety here would be rather precarious, and that I advised them to change their hunting-grounds. After which we made some presents to them; and the ladies having regained their saddles, we returned to Pensacola without further incident.

Cantonment Clinch, January, 1823.

Dear H——: The day following the date of my last I was detailed as the Judge Advocate of a General Court Martial for the trial of Guard House Prisoners, (as we call the private soldiers who, when charged with serious offences, are confined under guard until brought to trial,) and the court has been in session ten days.

During this time I often thought of the Indians encamped near the Bayou Grande, and their feud with Diego. I related to my much-esteemed friend, Captain Bell, who was a member of the court, the circumstances attending our accidental visit to the Indian camp, and asked what he knew of this man Diego. Bell, who has been with the regiment ten years, informed me that Diego is a native of Havana, though he has been living about Pensacola for many years; that his ostensible occupation has been that of a cowherd, and that he is said to possess a good herd; but that, at times, he would leave the neighborhood; when his cattle sometimes strayed off their range, and on his return cost him much trouble to reclaim them from their wanderings. These vexations the Spaniard, habitually irascible, usually bears with commendable composure; but as he commonly keeps much aloof, and returns general and vague answers when questioned as to his business while absent, little is really known of him. "In fine," said the Captain, "I half suspect the fellow of being in some way or other connected with a half smuggling, half piratical crew."

I could not help feeling an interest in the safety of the children of the forest, between whom and the vengeful Spaniard I knew a feud must continue to exist, if they remained within striking distance of each other; and as we were off duty this morning, I proposed to Bell that we should ride down to the hunting-camp.

On arriving at the ground, we found that the camp had been abandoned some eight or ten days. The broad palmetto-leaves, with which the tent or cabin was thatched, had been partially thrown off and scattered by the winds; and now faded and grown yellow, they either hung loosely on the poles, or lay in disorder upon the ground.

A quantity of fish-bones lay bleaching around the remains of the extinguished fire; the little scaffold used for drying fish was thrown down; the slight sapling, resting on a couple of forked sticks, which had answered the purpose of a crane upon which to hang the little copper kettle, had withstood the stress of the storm, but now thoroughly smoke-dried, was the only memento of the many wholesome meals that had been prepared through its agency. Near by lay a half-worn sieve made of split cane, such as the Indian housewife uses to bolt her flour, whether of corn or the coonta-root, (a species of arrowroot,) after it has undergone the process of grinding, or rather beating in a mortar chopped or sunk into the body of the nearest log. Everything bore marks of that wanton thoughtlessness with which the red man abandons his temporary abode, whenever he finds a clearer spring or a better hunting-ground; confiding in his own resources, or trusting to the bountiful providence of nature, to supply the few things needful for his support and comfort. As we rode up to the deserted camp, a lonely turkey-buzzard rose lazily from the mouth of the tent, and settled on a branch of a stunted pine hard by, where he sat quietly awaiting the departure of the intruders, to renew his search for some scraps of dried fish or venison on which to finish his scanty meal. No living thing was in sight save the foul carrion-bird we had driven from the desolate hearth, and silence reigned over the secluded spot lately the scene of strife and bloodshed. As I looked upon the altered appearance of all before me, I called to mind the figure of the Indian, when, under the influence of his passion, it seemed to dilate to more than mortal size; and the next moment the same manly figure, as disappointment smote his deadly purpose to avenge a dastardly assault, fall dashed and confounded to the earth. I recalled with admiration the silent but all-daring devotion of the wife; and with detestation the malignant and diabolical conduct and countenance of the Spaniard.

"Where now," said I, addressing Bell for the first time since we had come upon the ground, "are they who were the actors in this scene?—Has the Indian, with whom revenge is a virtue, sought and found an opportunity to gratify the longings of his spirit, and requited the other with the death he himself escaped. Or has the Spaniard, still vindictive, followed the Mus-ko-ghe in his retreat, and perpetrated the foul vengeance that rankled in his bosom?"

Revolving these things in our minds, and exchanging our surmises, we turned our horses' heads towards the abode of Diego, in order to ascertain, if possible, the truth, or gain some clew to it. On reaching the hut, we at first discovered before a well-filled rack, under an open shed which occupied one corner of the enclosure, the pretty pony of the Spaniard, on whom he had bestowed the endearing appellation of Amado.

"He cannot be far from home," said Bell, "for there is his pony, his constant companion in the woods." As we drew rein in front of the door, we were greeted with the harsh bark of a yellow bulldog of the Cuba breed, one of the fiercest and most indomitable of dogs; whereupon the shining face of a comely French quadroon was thrust out at the half-open door and again withdrawn. Bell called out, inquiring if Diego were at home. The quadroon again made her appearance, and replied to the inquiry in a rather ill-humored negative.

"Pray, when shall I find him at home," he asked.

"I cannot say," was the brief reply.

"I am very desirous to see him. Can you tell me whither he has gone?" he continued, in a bland persuasive tone.

"I know not," was the curt answer.

"When did he leave home?" he asked.

"Some days ago," she replied, evasively.

"And you expect him back——"

"*Mon dieu! monsieur*, what do you ask me for," she replied, evidently growing impatient at Bell's persevering to prolong a conversation and an interview she had no desire to continue.

"My husband, sir, does not tell me his business!" and with a very decided "*Bon jour, monsieur*," the French Creole closed and bolted the door.

Finding the woman so obdurately uncommunicative, we rode on, satisfied that any further attempt to draw from her what she determined to conceal would be fruitless. Bell, who had always regarded Diego with a wary eye, remarked, that the conduct of the woman tended to increase his doubts as to the occupation of Diego; that there was something about the man and his wife, which, if not criminal, at least sought concealment. But if he left home only two or three days before, the Indians, who evidently departed some eight days before him, were probably safe." Discussing such matters, we reached the barracks in time for dinner.

PENSACOLA, JANUARY, ——.

DEAR H——: We are now in the midst of the Carnival! Believe me, I have been many days in a constant whirl of merry-makings with this simple and amiable people; with whom pranks of all sorts are tolerated during this season of license and excess; and practical jests are freely played upon friend or stranger without the least fear of giving offence. I must carry you back to the time when the long anticipated St. Stephen's day was ushered in with a sun of surpassing brightness.

No holiday is so joyously welcomed by the volatile Creoles of Pensacola as the "Feast of St. Stephen," which, coming on the 26th of December, is the commencement of the Carnival, and the opening of those scenes of mirth and festivity, wherein all classes of society indulge more or less the little propensions of their minds, without restraint and without fear of censure. They have from childhood been taught to look upon it as a season from which care should be banished, and over which pleasure should preside. And those who with advancing years have become somewhat serious and stately, now strive to unbend, and to assume a countenance in unison with the more youthful and lively. On this occasion the Carnival was to open with a *bal masqué*, or masked ball.

On the morning of the 26th, by appointment, I called on Carlota to accompany her to the "magazine" of Madame Louise, who had imported from New Orleans for the occasion a full assortment of dominos and masks. On entering her doors, we beheld what to my eyes was a rare display of gaudy apparel and distorted *phizes*, suitable to the dresses of hermits, pilgrims, Turks, Indians, &c., together with others of softer features, intended to personate beauteous damsels, modest nuns, or blooming shepherdesses. It had been arranged that the fair sister of my friend Ferdinand and your humble servant should be mated for the evening. She selected a simple domino and mask, and I of course a similar one, neither of them requiring that the wearer should undertake to support any particular character. On reaching the upper end of the long show-room, we were shown into an inner apartment of smaller size, where the lady of sarcenet and gauze, surrounded by her assistants, was engaged in altering or finishing dresses that had been bespoken. This room was hung round with various habiliments, so ranged upon the wall as to form an unbroken tapestry. All were paraded in the most showy and ostentatious manner, and their fixed eyes stared or smiled in inexpressive steadiness on each other and on the company.

"Mademoiselle Carlota," cried the lady presiding, "I am charmed to see you at last. Yesterday I was looking for you all day. All the ladies here; admiring, whispering, walking round, choosing, and then telling me in my ear which to send home;—(you know I always keep secrets!) Now, who do you suppose has taken that magnificent Turkish frock and trousers, and that splendid turban? You may guess, but I must not tell you—though" (in a lower tone) "I think one fine portly gentleman's heart will be quite gone when he sees her in that costume, with her small waist, and her pretty foot and round ankle peeping from under the trousers. What think you, Mademoiselle?"

"I think," said Carlota, rather dryly, "the Colonel's heart is *quite gone* already."

"*Mon dieu!* Mademoiselle," said the woman, laughing, "I did not say it was any Colonel! I never disclose the secrets of my patrons."

"I am well acquainted, Madame, with your name for fidelity in such matters," said Carlota, laughing in her turn; "but I know but one lady whose small round waist and pretty foot would show to such advantage in the Sultana-dress, and I know but one portly gentleman who admires that lady."

With this we took our leave of the loquacious Madame Louise, and returned to the home of Carlota, where I took my leave with a promise to wait upon her at an early hour in the evening.

The appointed hour found us entering the assembly room. I had heard and read so much of *bals masqués*, that it cannot be denied my curiosity was excited to behold the novel sight. When we entered, few of the masques had arrived, and those few were marching in stately silence from one end of the room to the other, looking more like ghosts of the departed that had but recently reached the dread domain of Pluto, and were there wandering about in search of some truant love or fugitive offender, than, like corporeal Christians, come together for diversion and enjoyment. However, it was not long before the room was filled; the music struck up a lively air, which infused life and animation into all present. There were elevated seats on one side of the hall, to which spectators and those who had become fatigued with the exertions of the extravagant *fandango* or other fantastic dance, might retire until they had recovered sufficiently to return to the diversion. Carlota proposed that we should take seats here, that I might have a better view of the scene before us.

While here seated a highly interested observer, I could not but think how pitiable it was to see that so few of the masquers even attempted to support the character to which the exterior they had assumed pertained. The disguise of exterior seemed soon to be penetrated or voluntarily thrown off. Indeed, the quick eye of my fair companion soon detected most of her acquaintances, whom she pointed out to me. She said that a trifling singularity of manner, or the style of dancing, sometimes a single step, betrayed to her one of her every-day companions; and in this way particular sets composed of persons well known to each other, get together, and enjoy themselves without formality and without restraint. And thus, indeed, it seemed to be; for after the first few attempts at disguise were exhausted or detected, any further effort at concealment was abandoned and mutual recognition followed. Thus, a gentleman approaches a lady and salutes her with *"Ah, beau masque! je vous connois;"* and offering his arm, leads the willing fair one to join in the dance. Sometimes, however, I witnessed the passage of arms between two valiant champions well sustained to the last. After admiring the *tout ensemble* for some time, our attention was attracted to the chattering of two rival Harlequins, who had entered into a contest for the palm of superiority, directly in front of us. Their dance was the *fandango,* which they footed to the discordant music of their own voices, and the quick, clicking accompaniment of their sharp-toned castanets. Their light and easy carriage of the body in springing from the floor, and their quick and gliding movements, as they mutually advanced and retired, were truly surprising, and soon brought a crowd around them to witness the performance. The applause of the spectators encouraged them to renewed exertions, and their attitudes became more and more extravagant, till, in order to draw forth a fresh peal of applause, they frequently fell into such ridiculous postures that it was with the greatest difficulty they recovered their equilibrium. Still they resumed the contest with greater exertions, and for a time it seemed doubtful which of the diamond-gentlemen would be the victor. At length, however, Fortune, who so often interferes and terminates the struggle between well-matched combatants, caused the heels of the larger and more vigorous knight, somehow or other, to fly up, and laid him sprawling at full length on the floor, which reverberated from the violence of the shock. The cruel burst of delight which at this mishap came from the by-standers, quite overwhelmed the unfortunate dancer, who, hastily making his way through the crowd, left the palm to his lighter, or more agile, or more fortunate competitor.

Their places were immediately taken by another and very different couple. A little, old, gray-headed, shrivelled Frenchman led into the area just vacated a young, sylph-like shepherdess, and, gracefully and profoundly bowing to her, commenced the fandango. He was not in mask, and his face, as well as his garb, proclaimed him not far above the working-class, yet his air and manner had the dignity and polish of a man of higher degree. The face of his partner was concealed by a black silk shade, through two round holes in which a pair of bright eyes sparkled, and her costume was one that displayed to the best advantage a lithe and youthful figure. The beauty of this dance consists in assuming the various postures, attitudes, and gestures expressive of the feelings the dancer wishes to exhibit towards his partner. The advances of the old gentleman were at first ceremonious, and marked with respectful consideration; they were received by his youthful partner with great assumed timidity and maiden coyness. As the dance progressed, the spirit of both was aroused, and the gray-beard evinced all the impassioned vehemence of a youthful adorer. His tantalising partner now enticed him by the graceful display of a fairy foot and half the lower limb, or allured him with outstretched arms; and then, at the moment he seemed about to clasp her, she would elude his attempt with a skill and agility that were truly surprising.

By this time, throughout the room, all seemed confusion. Recognitions so numerous had taken place that the most incongruous and ill-matched parties or couples were sauntering on the parade, and idly chatting, or perhaps freely criticising the beauty or the character of some one of the motley crowd, who, now fatigued with the dance, were strolling round the room awaiting the announcement of supper. Here were the Turk and the Jew arm-in-arm; there an Indian chief with a shepherdess; the monk and the merry-andrew, laughing at their own jests; an old woman is flirting with a boy; and a blanketed squaw is followed, flattered, and courted by a powdered beau of the past century.

Carlota now proposed that we should join in the promenade. We had scarcely reached the floor, when an elderly mask, who had been a pestilent annoyance to many of the passers-by with his witty or sarcastic remarks, and still preserving with wonderful skill his *incognito*, touched my shoulder and whispered in my ear his name. It was Captain Bell himself; he was dressed as an old man, with an ashy-pale and haggard face. While he spoke to me, an Indian chief of noble proportions advanced and thus accosted him, —

"Ah, *Paleface!* what brings you here? you seem to take pleasure in saying rude impertinencies. One of your complexion has no business here; you infest this bright, glaring region with that ashy face of yours."

Indeed, the glare of the lamps gave a deathlike pallor to the lank features of the mask. Bell answered mildly:

"The novelty and gayety of the scene is amusing to a stranger, and the pleasure is enhanced by the easy freedom which seems to be licensed by the wearing of a painted face."

"You appear, sir," rejoined the other, "to enter upon the duties of the evening with becoming gravity, and you doubtless enjoy the elevated sentiment and refined commerce of the *bal masqué*, as much as you seem to contribute to their augmentation."

This was uttered contemptuously, and with a sweeping bow that was evidently intended to annihilate the person addressed.

"*Remercie, beau masque*," returned Bell, repaying the bow with interest, "you are very polite, and your attention would be the more flattering did it not come from one who is as noted for his dexterity in circulating false coin as he is celebrated for coining false compliments."

"How, sir!" said the mask, greatly irritated by this last thrust; "recollect you are addressing a gentleman, and there are bounds even here for trespassing beyond which the mask and domino are no shield."

"*Gardez vous même, beau masque, je vous connais bien,*" replied Bell, tauntingly. "I have you at my mercy; to expose you in your true colors to this gay assembly requires but one word from me; but, adieu, *beau masque.*"

"Stop, sir!" interrupted the mask, confronting Bell with a determined air; "we part not thus. You have made a remark this evening which neither your acquaintance with me can authorize, nor your age, if a stranger, can justify. I insist on your recalling the expression before you leave this spot."

This was spoken in a very audible voice, and attracted the attention of those who were passing at the moment. Finding himself an object of scrutiny to the by-standers, Bell at once assumed a different tone from that of badinage which he had hitherto used, and turning upon the other, with determination expressed in his manner, said, in a calm, clear voice,—

"I am surprised, sir, that you should have the assurance to address to me such language, even under cover of a mask; and I repeat, in the presence of this company, that you are a counterfeiter!"

While Bell pronounced the last emphatic words, there was a firmness and dignity in his manner that for an instant checked the haughtiness of the arrogant mask, stilled the giddy mirth of the young and thoughtless standing by, and communicated a sobriety of mien to all around. The mask attempted to speak; but, whether choked with rage or overcome by some other passion or emotion, he failed to give utterance to his feelings. Then, the next moment.

tearing suddenly the pasteboard from his face, discovered the flushed features, compressed lips, and bloodshot eyes of Ferdinand Oreo, fixed full upon Bell.

"Now, sir," he, at length gulping his passion, rather roared than said, "dare you repeat what you have said?"

Bell was shocked at the appearance of his friend; and instantly regretting that he had inflicted so severe a blow on him in return for the trifling annoyance he had himself endured, but still sustained by that presence of mind which under no contingency ever left him, he deliberately unmasked; and advancing to his friend, with all his manly good-nature beaming in his countenance, took Ferdinand by the hand, and addressing the numerous by-standers whom the affair had already collected around them, in a calm voice said,—

"Ladies and gentlemen, I appeal to you whether my friend has not counterfeited the Indian chief to perfection?"

This happy turn which Bell gave to what had like to have become a serious affair, at once changed the face of things, and the applause which followed was not altogether without its effect upon Ferdinand, who was more gratified by the acknowledgment of the triumph of his skill, than annoyed by the exposure of his loss of temper. The friends heartily shook hands, and the affair terminated with a slight reproof to Ferdinand, her brother, by the sagacious Carlota.

Supper was now announced, and the managers of the entertainment, aloud, requested the company to unmask before entering the banqueting-room. As Carlota and your humble servant filed into the procession, we found ourselves immediately in rear of a distinguished couple, a Mr. Bruce Wallace and his bride. Mr. Wallace, a genuine descendant of one of Scotland's noblest sons, was a gentleman who stood six feet four in his pumps, gaunt and raw-boned, with a large head, a long face, in which the nose was a very prominent feature, and straight, sandy hair. His complexion was almost a brickdust color, being frightfully scarred and pitted with small-pox. Yet, being very rich, he had recently married a blooming widow, and had come from New Orleans, his residence, to pass the honeymoon in the delightful climate of Florida. He had appeared this evening in a simple domino and mask, to amuse himself for a few hours in noting the manners of the gay Creoles. He had at once obeyed the command to unmask, and was moving on quietly, with his bride on his arm, when the manager, who stood at the door of the supper-room, a young French Creole, casting his eyes on the lantern-jaws, high cheek-bones, red hair, and hideous complexion of the Scot, supposing that the latter had been guilty of an infringement of the regulations of the assembly, politely requested Monsieur to unmask. The blood of all the Bruces and Wallaces rose to the forehead of the Scot, as he turned upon the young Creole a countenance decidedly more hideous than any mask he had had the fortune to gaze upon in the course of that evening, the features and expression having been rendered more fiend-like by what the proud Bruce imagined was intended to be an insult. He simply uttered, in a smothered tone,—"Sir?" that seemed to come from the bottom of the deep, and glared upon the bowing Creole with eyes that shot forth an unearthly light.

"I have the honor to inform Monsieur," repeated the manager, "that the rules of this assembly require every one to unmask before supper."

"What d'ye mean, sirrah?" ejaculated Wallace.

"I assure you, Monsieur, reiterated the manager, "that the rules are perfectly imperative on this point, and admit of no exceptions."

The Scot seemed bursting with rage and the exertion it required to keep his fingers from the throat of the Creole. He paused a moment, then stepping forward in a direction that threw the whole light of a chandelier full upon his face, he said,—

"Hark ye, sir, were I not persuaded that ye are—"

"*Mon dieu!*" cried the manager, interrupting this incipient denunciation, and stepping quickly forward he seized the hand of Mr. Wallace in both of his, and imploringly said,—"*Mille pardons, Monsieur;* my sight serves me badly in this dazzling light, and I had taken you for my friend Sylvester, who is about your height;" and stepping aside, he bowed the fierce North Briton into the banqueting room. As we passed in, following this distinguished couple, Carlota whispered to me,—

"How strange!"—but directly after said, "I have not seen anywhere our friend Madame La Fleur or the gallant Colonel, who is acknowledged to be the fortunate rival of Mr. Norton."

We were, however, scarcely placed at the table, when we perceived standing nearly opposite, in full voluptuous but not overgrown bulk, the figure of our friend La Fleur, in all the glory of the Sultana-costume. Her heart like a ripe peach seemed ready to fall into the hands of the gallant Englishman.

At length the pleasures of the table, like all worldly pleasures, terminated; and the music again summoned the dancers to the ball-room. I had now the satisfaction, or, I should say, the enjoyment of a delightful waltz with Carlota, after which she complained of fatigue, and I accompanied her home.

When seated alone in my own quarters, I passed over in my mind the varied scenes I had witnessed in one little night, which, as I dwelt upon them in succession, seemed to me the history of an age. The whole thing far exceeded my most sanguine expectations. There was certainly great want of what you would call refinement; but there was a spirit, a warmth of sentiment, perhaps you will say of mundane pleasurableness, that greatly compensated in my opinion for the want of it. When imagination, dear H, has painted a scene in anticipation, how often are we disappointed, when time at length brings that scene in its true colors before us! How dim appear the hues of reality when compared with the bright tints in which the mind had previously presented the picture to our view. I confess I was not only amused but delighted with the *Bal masqué*, though not the most refined divertissement.

Let us, dear H, justly estimate the enjoyments of the passing hour, assured that the visions of the morrow will be as sadly clogged with earthly reality as are the verities of the passing day.

Cantonment Clinch, January 20.

Dear H——: The morning after the *Bal masqué*, the military duties of the forenoon having been discharged, I rode out alone. It was a beauteous day as ever the sun lighted up in the glorious clime of Florida. The heavens, except here and there a small fleecy cloud, were clear and serene, unruffled and undisturbed by the breath of a zephyr. At the same time the air was light and elastic, and of that happy temperature which, inducing a calm repose of the physical faculties, and leading the mind to indulge in a dreamy tranquillity, causes the mere consciousness of existence to become an unspeakable delight. Such, my friend, is the effect of an atmospheric influence experienced here, which is known in no other part of the continent. I gave a loose rein to my mare and allowed her to ramble at will along the by-paths of the pine forest. After passing an hour delightfully in this way, I returned to town, and made my call of ceremony on the lovely

Carlota, and after learning that the fatigues of the evening had left no impression on the spirits or the cheek of the fair one, I passed half an hour in discussing with her the varied adventures of this, to me, most novel and strange sight, I took my leave. On the Plaza I met Capt. Bell, who called my attention to a party of French Creoles, that were busily and very noisily engaged at the farther side of the square.

"Those volatile creatures," he said, "that you see at work, bent upon participating in every species of amusement and pleasure which the Carnival, the season of licensed indulgence, not only tolerates but encourages, seem at last clogged with sensual gratification, and are, as you perceive, preparing to solace their wearied faculties by '*une petite recreation raisonable.*' In short, they are erecting a theatre, where they purpose this evening to regale the public with the performance of '*la comédie pas de tout inferieure.*'" Looking in the direction to which the Captain pointed, I saw quite a number of persons at work, and at the same time talking and laughing with great vivacity; and through whose united exertions a vast pavilion of heterogéneous materials was rapidly coming into shape. As we approached, we perceived that the walls of the building were slightly constructed of rough boards, while the sails of several foreign as well as American vessels contributed to the formation of the canvas dome, which reared its white crest above.

And here, mingled with this jovial party of Creoles, certain individuals, whom national prejudice or personal interest had taught to scan each other's movements with wariness and suspicion, were brought together in unjarring unity of purpose by the magic wand of the "*Goddess of Pleasure.*" *Vive la bagatelle!* was the motto of the hour; and the winning charm of the Creole's manner won into the chorus of his song the voices of both the tenacious

Briton and the proud Spaniard. All were voluntarily employed in effecting the purpose of his "*belle folie.*" The principal directors on the occasion were Manuel Ricaneur and Pierre Le Rocher. The former was short and rather stout, with a ruddy complexion, and a wild, dark eye; famed for his skill in a *horse-trade*, and equally adroit in escaping with a whole skin from all sorts of scrapes into which his gallantry or love of mischief led him. He was one of the principal performers of the Thespian Corps. The latter, without any talent for the stage, had more daring, equal fondness for mischief, and it was universally conceded that no popular misdoing could be conducted on orthodox principles without his presence.

Captain Bell having promised to remain to see the piece, he dined with me at the hotel. At the table, after some conversation respecting the extravagant license and the excesses indulged in, during the Carnival, in Catholic countries, I remarked that scenes of indulgence similar to those enacted under the favoring toleration of the Romish Church immediately preceding Lent, the period of humiliation and mortification of the flesh, history had taught us were noted or observed, from the earliest days of which She files the record, as enacted on the approach of death when brought face to face with us in the form of raging pestilence, sweeping off the brightest and dearest of those around us, and threatening to make ourselves the next victims of its unrelenting violence. And it is because all evils, but more particularly death, are viewed with greater terror at a distance than when they are brought, even in their most frightful shapes, immediately before our eyes. Thucydides tells us that during the greatest horrors of the plagues at Athens, men were more unfeeling, more profligate than at any other time. And so it has been, as we learn from various accounts in the large cities on the coast of the Mediterranean, when subject to such devastating visitations.

Bell replied: "Last summer I was ordered to New Orleans on duty, which would detain me about a week. On arriving I found the yellow fever raging there; it had appeared suddenly with great violence, and, however unwilling I might be to encounter such a foe, there was nothing to be done but to discharge my duty faithfully. Hundreds were swept off daily by the dire disease; yet, even at its worst period, the men I met with, though they saw their companions hourly dying before their eyes, seemed to become more given to immorality in its worst forms as the prospect of death approached them. There was more drinking, more gambling, more vice, more debauchery of the most loathsome and hideous cast than I had ever before dreamed could enter the mind of man. Even while paying the last tribute to their best friends, they grew more reckless as their chance of following them increased."

"*Allons, Messieurs!*" cried Captain Wolf; "to the theatre,—the hour has arrived, and *vive la comédie* is the word."

To the theatre we then went, one and all. The evening was mild; and the fragile edifice, now decorated and lighted, might pass for a commodious and comfortable theatre. On entering we found an audience, as eager as motley, and impatiently awaiting the raising of the curtain. The interior, to be sure, was not divided into box, pit, and lobby; yet the front seats seemed by common consent conceded to the better classes, and there was a marked and essential, though but a nominal line, which separated them from those of more humble station, as, for example, the retiring and inoffensive quadroon women, who, quietly seated in the rear, thought not of making themselves conspicuous. The seats of the former had been rendered as commodious and comfortable as the hasty construction of the building would admit of. The latter, in the rear and more elevated, commanded a view of the company assembled to witness the performance, as well as the stage. Among the occupants of the last seats, raised some six or eight feet from the ground, was seated, with many others of her class, a very fair quadroon damsel, possessing a bulk and rotundity of person hitherto unsung, and until now unknown within the circle of her cast. She was arrayed in a dress of calico of the brightest dyes; and her fair, round face was surmounted with a flaming red bandana *à la* turban. On the same seat were several soldiers, in one of whom, remarkable for his lank figure, thin face, and large goggle eyes, I recognized our mess-waiter, O'Donnelly. He was seated next the fat lady, and appeared to be scanning the portentous proportions of his neighbor with wondering eyes. At last, uttering an involuntary grunt of admiration, in which was mingled no small spice of indefinite aversion, he recoiled from her vicinity as far as the crowded state of the house would allow. While I was making this survey of the audience, the curtain rose; the performance proceeded, and timely applause kept up the spirits and confidence of the actors. The piece chosen was a French comedy, and of a character in keeping with the taste of the time. All was going well, and the approval of the players, as well as the play, was announced from all parts of the house, when a brawling British tar, seated three benches in front of the fat lady, and who, in nautical phrase, had drunk himself full "*three sheets in the wind*," began to manifest his contempt for the mummery of the "*Mounsheers*" in a very audible soliloquy. At last, no longer able to endure the enacting of a piece of which he understood not a single word, or perchance overcome by protracted thirst, he rose from his seat, stretched himself, and having disburdened his cheek of an enormous *quid*, thus delivered his sentiments in a tone that drowned the voices of the actors:

"Stage ahoy!" cried he, fixing his gaze full upon the astonished Thespians, who in mute amazement turned their regards, together with the whole house, upon the speaker. "Stage ahoy! I say. What's your play called? I've seen many a better one aboard ship; and it's rather long between drinks here, so I'm off."

Having thus vented his contempt, he stepped upon his seat, and with the agility and *aplomb* of a foretopman, bounded over the heads of the intervening spectators, and alighted in full force on the hindmost bench between the large lady and O'Donnelly. The whole seat gave way with a loud crash, and the fair quadroon, in an effort to save herself, seized O'Donnelly by the shoulder, and thus drawing him towards herself, brought him to the ground under her, and he lay upon his back with the heaviest part of her fair person directly over his face. There had been one sudden disruption of timber, one scream of terror, and the whole mass of shattered material and helpless humanity lay in a confused heap. Dismal notes of woe now issued from the dark motley in every different key of the all-expressive human voice. The performance was interrupted, and men hastened, prompted by humane feelings or by curiosity, to the scene of the calamity. Some of the unfortunate wretches were dragged forth, while others crawled out of the ruins, and the hubbub of the instant was subsiding into wailings and lamentations. Amidst the broken boards and rafters lay immovable the fat quadroon. Corporal Canteen and one or two of his comrades manfully laid hold of her ladyship, and attempted to raise her off the luckless O'Donnelly, but they lugged and tugged in vain, till, hearing the half-smothered subterranean-like groans of the poor Irishman, the two then seized him by the heels, and fairly jerked him out from his steamy and perilous situation.

"Well, man," cried the Corporal, after the Hibernian had been set upon his legs, "how is it wi' ye? tell me, are ye hurt?"

"Uh! uh!" articulated the other, in the most doleful accents. "Corporal, I'm not just dead; but I've been smothered in beauty. Uh! to think that I've lived all my life a single man, to die such a death at last. Uh! sorrow's the day! but if I get over this, which I don't expect to do, I'll keep clear of them sort of tempters, I will."

Tranquillity was however at last restored; the wounded were mustered, and it was happily ascertained that no bones were broken. The fat lady was escorted home by a bevy of *bons amis*, and the disconsolate Irishman restored to his wonted good-humor; but the ill-starred tar who had caused all the mischief, having taken advantage of the momentary confusion, had made his escape, and was nowhere to be found. The play was resumed, and played out without further interruption.

CANTONMENT CLINCH, February 1.

DEAR H——: Some time has passed, since the date of my last, without the occurrence of any incident worth recording. But during the last three days of the Carnival (which, thank Heaven, is now passed) folly reigned with unbounded sway. Horse-racing and street-carousing were the universal pastimes, until *Mardi Gras* (Shrove Tuesday) brought to a close the crying dissipations of sensual indulgence of the period. The Carnival is ended, and Lent, in Catholic countries, the season of bile and melancholy, the consequence of gormandizing and long-continued and unnatural excitement, commences. We cannot now fail to acknowledge that after such excesses, forty days of abstinence and retirement are as requisite to restore the disordered stomach and repair the shattered nerves as prayer and repentance are for the salvation of the soul of sinful man. As fasting is a ritual observance that was originally instituted in the East,—in a land where abstinence is the only safeguard against the fierce and consuming heat of the climate in spring,—and at an age when to the sacred office of the priest was added that of the physician, it would appear that the rite was established with a care for the temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of the people.

On the evening of *Mardi Gras*, while sitting at the hotel, in a listless reverie, my attention was attracted by the distant noise of voices and discordant laughter. On going to the door, I beheld a confused crowd of oddly attired persons, with tapers in their hands, moving down the street. Now, what can be the meaning of this? I asked myself. The clamor and violent gesticulation seemed to warrant the belief that no great harmony of feeling prevailed amongst them, but anon another general burst of laughter evinced the fact that mummery and good-humor prevailed.

The crowd soon arrived in front of the hotel, when I discovered that many of the individuals were in mask and the figures of most of them were more or less fantastically decorated. Their object at the moment appeared to be to extinguish each others tapers, and to guard their own. Conspicuous in the party was a tall man with an enormous gilded chapeau, who, in endeavoring to evade the pursuit of an equally tall person in female apparel, had fallen backwards over an old African woman who was passing through the crowd. A shout of laughter followed this accident. The tall gentleman quickly regained his feet and recovered his mask, which had fallen off. Mortified by the exposure, the tall knight dashed upon and closely pursued the Amazon, who retreated with her face always to the foe. She kept her fierce assailant at arm's length;

and bearing her taper aloft in the left hand, bore down all opposition by the energy and rapidity of her movements. Still she retreated, watching the hero of the chapeau with a steady eye, as if only awaiting an unguarded moment, which her surpassing strength and agility would enable her to profit by.

This opportunity occurred the next moment, when by a dexterous movement she succeeded in extinguishing her opponent's taper, and swiftly darted out of sight. The boldness of this achievement left on my mind a strong doubt as to the sex of the masked. The game was continued with unabated spirit as they progressed down the street, until turning into Palafox Street they were lost to my view.

How long this fantastic game — this frivolous farewell to sensual gratification and unbridled licentiousness was carried on, I know not. The practice makes but too manifest the levity of the human mind. In the primeval ages, man was prompted to propitiate the Deity by sacrificial offerings and purifications. In after-ages came fasts, penances, and abstinence from pleasure; but as time passed and the sons of men became wiser and more worldly, they were unwilling, it would seem, to take upon themselves the sobrieties of life for forty days without an equivalent; and hence the Carnival.

But enough of this. I must bid you "*buenos noches,*' dear friend; and at the same time take leave of the *Carnevale,* or *farewell to flesh.*

CANTONMENT CLINCH, February.

DEAR H——: A fortnight has passed, into which has been crowded a more than usual amount of military duties of minor importance; and this must be my excuse for a longer interval between my letters. An accident, however, which a few days ago brought us acquainted with a mysterious Spaniard, from the Island of Cuba, is not without interest; as it exhibits in strong colors a glaring trait in the character of people of his class in that island. To begin at the beginning, I must tell you, that, having at last a day of privilege or immunity from the irksome duties of the garrison, I had promised to pass the day I have named at the Barrancas, with my kind friend Captain Bell. Accordingly I immediately after breakfast was at his door; his beautiful mare was brought out, and we set out on our journey without further delay. The day, as usual, was bright and cheering to the spirits. As we left the pine forest and approached "*le Bayou Grande*," the face of the country lately so richly variegated in hue, was now reduced to a sober brown by the pressure of winter's hand, albeit his icy fingers but tenderly touch the plants of this genial clime. The scene would have been sombre, despite the relief shed over it by the bright and polished green of the occasional clumps of the Redbay-tree, had not the heavens above been serene and smiling.

On arriving at the beach, we observed at some distance a long pirogue, or canoe, such as is used by fishermen on the coast of the Gulf. The mast was stepped, and the tall sail swung loosely on the gunwale; while two persons, standing in the water alongside, were leaning over the boat, as if stowing away a seine or some kind of freight. On shore there were two others; the one on horseback was well dressed; the other, who wore the broad palmetto hat of a fisherman, was on foot. Willing to break the monotony of the ride by a few moments' conversation with the rude wanderers of the Gulf coast, we turned our horses' heads in the direction of the party. As we approached, the horseman turned his steed towards the head of the bayou. Again he stopped, apparently impressing some final injunction on his companion; then waving his hand as if bidding adieu, he put spur, and soon disappeared in a thicket of yapon-bushes. We rode slowly up, and saluting the fisherman with a "*Buenos dias, Señores*," were not a little surprised to detect in the person who was in conference with the horseman no less a personage than our quondam acquaintance Diego Rojo, who very coolly returned my salutation. He was giving directions to the two men—who, at a glance, we perceived were half-breed Indians—respecting the stowage of the boat.

"Well met, Diego," said Captain Bell, in his mild, familiar way.

"Yes, Señor," returned Diego, rather turning away; "a poor fisherman may not rest at this season when the tide serves. A single haul of redfish will not furnish him with bread and coffee for a week."

"Aye, truly," returned Bell; "but you have other resources more productive than the clear shoals of the Perdido, which doubtless supply you with the best berry of Cuba, as well as with the most fragrant leaf;" indicating, by a slight motion of his riding-whip, the cigar that occupied the Spaniard's mouth.

Diego turned, and slowly removing the cigar from his mouth, fixed his eye for a moment upon the Captain's countenance. But his suspicions, whatever they were, were removed by the expression of the calm eye that met his own; and having sent a volume of smoke from his mouth and nostrils, he asked, in his habitual quiet manner,—

"How, Señor, can a man, whose home is ever in the woods or on the fishing-grounds, whose only care is his cattle, whose only toil is at the seine,—how can he contrive to make more than a frugal subsistence?"

Diego now turned towards the boat, and in a quick tone of voice repeated his orders to his red comrades; and receiving answer that all things were arranged, he made a hasty *a dios*, saying he must be off at once or lose the tide. I now observed that his feet were bare and his pantaloons rolled up as he walked out to his boat, some ten paces from the shore. Having entered the "*pirogue*," he seated himself in the stern, and the two Indians having taken their paddles, the little bark swept smoothly out to a distance from the shore, where the tall sail would "*draw*" or catch the wind. As we rode on, and crossed the mouth of the bayou, which is here full half a mile wide, my eyes followed the dark sail, which was soon to be seen swiftly gliding past the Barrancas. A ride of two miles further brought us to the fort where, in due season, we dined with the officers of an artillery company stationed there. After dinner we all strolled out upon the parapets of the fort. Here, gazing upon the spacious bay, we distinguished laying at anchor, off the western point of the bay, a small schooner of about ten tons burden. At the same time we noticed a horseman coming down towards the beach opposite to where the fishing-craft lay. As he drew up upon the beach, a canoe, that was swinging at the stern of the little schooner, was cast loose and was brought to the shore by two of the crew. One of these men stepped out and held the horse, while the rider, whose fine figure was remarkable even at that distance, entered the boat, and in a few minutes sprang on board the little vessel. He was met, as he came upon deck, by a man whose medium dimensions and large "*sombrero*," or hat, we at once recognized as those of Diego. Bell whispered to me, "Do you recognize him?" On my replying in the affirmative, the Captain said no more. But soon after this we took our leave. When we had left the fort, the Captain opened the conversation,—

"I have for some time had my suspicions aroused, and I should not be surprised to find this fellow connected in some way or other with the pirates who infest the waters of the Gulf. We 'll pay a visit to the fellow's cabin, and see how affairs look there."

Thus saying, as we reached the eastern shore of the bayou, he touched the noble animal he rode with the spur, and the next moment we were bounding through the bushes towards the reputed fisherman's cabin. A half hour's ride brought us to the "*clearing*," and the enclosure which was denominated the Spaniard's garden. But the house was shut up, and no living animal, dog, cat, or domestic fowl, gave signs that it was inhabited; not even a light curl of smoke from the mud chimney indicated the presence of the woman within. The frail clap-board shed, which sufficed as stable for Diego's pony, was vacant, and the rack was empty. A single, sober turkey-buzzard, perched upon a stunted pine-tree near the house, seemed to watch in silent sadness over the forsaken premises; or, quietly wrapt in his own meditations, was patiently awaiting the daily meal which the scanty leavings of the table afforded him. Turning our horses' heads towards the Cantonment, we soon struck a trail which intersected the main trace from the Barrancas to Pensacola, and to Camp Clinch, the military station, at the distance of some two miles below the former. We had ridden rapidly, and, on suddenly emerging from the thicket into the open road, we came unexpectedly upon a horseman who was travelling the road which we have said led past the camp, or cantonment, to the town of Pensacola. The horse upon which this person rode, alarmed at our approach, started forward, and his forefoot catching under a root of the red or saw palmetto, he pitched heavily forward upon his head. His rider was thrown, and fell with violence upon his head and shoulder.

The Captain, who had been leading as we threaded the narrow path through the thicket, instantly drew up his white mare. The fallen horse staggered up, gave the deep trumpeting snort of affright; but the next moment, reassured by a glance at the object of his alarm, turned and smelled at the shoulder of his prostrate rider, whose manly form was stretched senseless before him. Bell at once dismounted, and, with my assistance, removed the man to the foot of a large tree near the trace, where he raised the head of the unfortunate upon his knee. Presently the stranger opened his large, dark eyes with a bewildered look, and endeavored to raise himself, but sank back again into Bell's arms. The wounded man closed his eyes, and uttered in a faint but calm voice, "At any time but this!"

"I fear you are seriously injured," said the Captain, in a soothing voice. "How is it with you, my friend?"

Without noticing the question the Captain had kindly asked, the man turned his languid, half-closed eyes upon the horse, and while his broad brow contracted with a savage fierceness, he muttered to himself, "May curses light upon thy floundering limbs,—at this moment, of all others, to be played so foul a trick! But pardon me, fair sir," he continued in a bland tone, "if fate should scowl upon me e'en in this, 't will not be the first time I've endured her frown. Kind sir, may I crave your assistance, if you have time at your disposal, to catch that ill-starred animal, and help to reinstate me in the saddle; for I find my back and shoulders are more roughly jolted than I at first imagined."

"You may command me most freely," returned the Captain, "in any way that I can serve you; for your misfortune is fairly chargeable at my door; my sudden and unlooked-for dash into the road having caused the fall of your horse. We are but a hundred yards or so from the cantonment to your right; you may see the barracks through the trees; and I must insist on carrying you to my quarters, where the Surgeon will examine your injuries, and make such applications as may seem necessary. Nay, I will admit no excuse whatever."

So saying, the Captain turned towards the horse, which, to the surprise of us both, our attention having been wholly given to the rider, proved to be no other than Diego's pony, Amado. Bell made no other comment at this discovery than a significant glance at myself. He approached the spiteful Amado, who was quietly browsing the wild spice-wood, and who suffered himself to be taken without further manifestation of displeasure than maliciously laying back his ears and showing his teeth. We then, with no little difficulty, having assisted the stranger to mount, rode slowly, on either side affording support, until we reached the Captain's quarters. He was at once placed upon the Captain's bed, and the Surgeon was sent for. The messenger soon returned with the report that the Surgeon had been suddenly taken ill with *cholera morbus* from eating an unripe pineapple, and was in bed, attended by the Hospital Steward. The Captain directed that his hostler Jupiter should at once mount a horse, and go after Surgeon Coburn. The man informed him that Jupiter had ridden to Pensacola to make some purchases for the stable. Bell's vexation was apparent to me, although he said nothing; and I at once declared I would mount my mare, and have the little Doctor on the spot in the shortest time possible. Without waiting to hear anything further from Bell, I sprang on my mare, and clapping the spurs to her flanks, was soon on my way to town. On arriving at the Doctor's quarters, I was directed to the hospital. Here I found my esteemed friend, the little fat surgeon, stripped to the elbows, standing at the head of a long table on which lay the corpse of a soldier; while at hand was a set of glittering dissecting instruments. The Doctor, on learning the state of affairs at the Cantonment, assured me he would accompany me without a moment's delay.

Jupiter, who had returned to his master's by a different route, almost at the instant I left, and who had been sent, with a flea in his ear, after myself, now showed his eager face at the door. The Surgeon still held in his hand a long knife, which he had taken up as he concluded his response to me, and for what purpose I had not conjectured. As, however, the negro, a brave fellow, by the by, had stopped short at the threshold on beholding the scene before him, the Doctor, fixing his look full on Jupiter, and giving a flourish to the knife, albeit as yet unstained with the black gore of the subject before him, demanded in a theatrical tone,—

"How now, Sir Glass Eyes, what has brought you here!"

But poor Jupiter's teeth chattered so that he could only half articulate, "Mas-ser—masser send me for you." And his enormously dilated eyes began to wander from the Surgeon's face to the stairs behind himself.

"Your master sent you to me, for what?" said the little Galen, in a coaxing tone, at the same time walking around the table. "Is it one of those ill-shapen legs the Captain wishes to have taken off?"

"Thank ye, Massa Doctor," returned Jupiter, "got a very sarviceable leg."

"Then make use of your legs, and tell the Captain I will be with him directly."

So saying, the Surgeon returned to the head of the table, and deliberately placed his left hand under the head of the dead man, and raising it from the table, laid the point of his knife against the back of the neck, and by a single circular cut severed the head from the trunk before either the hospital steward or myself had an idea of what he was about to do. Having removed the head, he dismissed the steward, and then turning to me, said,—

"You do not understand this, Lieutenant: I will explain. The man is to be buried to-morrow morning; the evening is now approaching, indeed it is on us; we shall not get back before midnight, and I must have time to-morrow to make a careful examination of the eye of this soldier, who was suffering at the time of his death (though not the cause of his death) from *Ophthalmia tarsi*, a disease, Lieutenant, of the eye; symptoms — heat, pain, and tension of the parts; it is a genus in the class *Pyrexia*, order *Phlegmasiæ*. I have now a very interesting case of the kind, where small ulcers, discharging a glutinous matter, appear on the *sebaceous* glands of the *tarsus*, — venesection and refrigerants have proved of no avail. I am extremely desirous to examine, microscopically, an eye similarly affected, and this appeared to me to be my only opportunity; so you see, Lieutenant, the necessity of taking advantage of it."

So saying, the Surgeon drew forth his pocket handkerchief, which he spread out upon the table, and placed the head in the centre, carefully drew the corners together, and tied the ends. This accomplished, he seized his hat, and calling out, in dramatic tone, "Now, Lieutenant, to horse," caught up his handkerchief and its contents, and marched out of the room, leaving the headless trunk in sole possession of it. In proceeding to the Surgeon's quarters, we had to cross the Plaza to a small house ensconced in the shrubbery of a court-yard, where he had established himself. Finding our horses awaiting us, he said to me, "I will not longer detain you;" and suiting the action to the word, he stepped to the side of the house, and opening the sliding door of a chicken-coop, placed his trophy carefully within it; then, without further ado, mounted his horse, and we set out for the Cantonment. On our arrival, the Captain met us in his sitting-room, and told us his patient had been extremely restless and excited, and had asked for brandy as a solace to his sufferings. He had given him the liquor, and he had drunk largely.

"I fear," said the Captain, in conclusion, "too much so for one in his condition."

On entering the bedroom, the patient was discovered with his eyes closed; but being addressed by the Surgeon, he started as from a troubled dose, and having replied to the questions of the former, he added in a quiet but impressive voice,—

"I pray you, Doctor, use what dispatch you may in setting my bones to rights; for never was a poor mortal in the rude clutches of an *'alguazil'* more keenly desirous to elude his grasp than am I at this moment to escape from the durance of a sick-bed. At any time," he continued, as if communing with himself, "I could have borne it, even with patience."

"Patience"—muttered Coburn, unceremoniously undoing the shirt-collar and exposing the shoulder and back, "however laudable we are taught to believe it may be when spontaneously exercised in the hour of misfortune—is a virtue that in a case like this must be practised per force. Why, my dear sir, you are shockingly bruised, though no bones are broken; antiphlogistics and bathing with proper stimulants may set you up in a week's time; but you must first lose a little blood." And he at once proceeded to tie up the arm and use the lancet. "Now this little powder will allay the excitement, and you had better sleep if you can; I will see you again in an hour."

We returned with the Captain down stairs, where we found dinner on the table. The Doctor's eyes sparkled with a deeper blue as he seated himself; and the oyster gombo and the boiled redfish, not inferior to the turbot, disappeared with prodigious celerity, as did afterwards the venison (of the Captain's killing). Having done due honor to his host's *cuisine*, he laid down his knife and fork with an expression of infinite satisfaction, and seizing the taper neck of a bottle of Sherry to which he had already paid his respects more than once, he addressed the head of the table:—

"Captain Bell, I drink to the health of the most accomplished sportsman of the Army!—Who but himself," continued he, turning to me, "could with his gun and line have provided such a dinner as we have just enjoyed?"

The Doctor then rose from the table, saying he would return to his patient. After he had gone, we passed in review the adventures of the day; and the conclusion we arrived at was, that the Spaniard by his mishap would fail to meet some appointment he had made with Diego, and with some sinister purpose, we could not but suspect. We joined the Doctor at the bed-side of the sick person, who was flushed and excited, and wandered in conversation which had the loose and communicative character of one who had been drinking too freely.

I saw Bell's eye glance towards the bottle which stood upon the table by the bed-side, and I observed also that it was nearly empty. The Surgeon was seated in an armchair, with a cigar in his mouth, and discoursing on the qualities of tobacco. While he spoke, I had an opportunity of studying more closely the strongly-marked features and powerful frame of the stranger. His dark eyes were shaded by straight brows, over which rose a massive forehead, smooth and hard-looking; his nose was slightly aquiline; but his mouth, the most striking feature, was full, firm, and at the same time sarcastic. A long, curled moustache was all that the razor had left of a thick black beard; in years, he was perhaps five-and-thirty. The Captain, taking advantage of a pause in the Doctor's lecture, said,—

"That is an unruly animal of your friend Diego."

"*My* friend!" said the other, turning his head quickly.

"The horse you rode," returned the Captain, "belongs I believe to Diego Rojo, and having seen you on the beach in company with Diego, this morning, I took the liberty to style him your friend; but, if I am wrong in so doing. you will pardon my mistake."

"'Tis no offence, sir. Ah, yes, I now remember, as Diego Rojo was about to embark for the fishing grounds, I met him on the beach, and while speaking to him I saw two persons pass on horseback.—(Excuse me, sir, I think this fall has confused my poor head.)—This man Diego has but lately been made known to me, as a man to whom I was recommended for information respecting lands in this part of the country. A shrewd fellow he seems to be, and perfectly happy when in his fishing-smack;" and his dark inquiring eye was bent full upon the Captain's face. The latter answered promptly,—

"That may be; but in what manner much of his time is better employed, he does not see fit to inform the curious."

The stranger's brow contracted, and he moved slightly as if to relieve his shoulder of which he complained as beginning to be stiff. Bell, without saying more, assisted him in changing his position.

"Thank you, sir; I am perfectly easy now—I was directed to this man, as I observed, for information as to the quality of the lands in this vicinity. I reside, sir, in the Island of Cuba. My father, who was an Englishman, and married to my mother, a Spanish lady, left at his death a plantation, which I wish to dispose of and settle where I may forget the unhappy passages of my earlier life. With this view I have come to Florida. I am a Spaniard in feelings and habits; my paternal descent will account to you for my knowledge of the English language."

The Surgeon, who had, as he conceived, been a *patient* listener during this time, asked the Captain and myself if we would not smoke; and as he spoke he drew from his pocket a beautifully mounted tortoise-shell case, evidently a present from his patient, and filled with the veritable mullein leaf tobacco. Addressing his patient, he said,—

"I find it difficult to get such cigars."

"There are but three farms," the other replied, "that produce tobacco of that quality. The texture of the leaf, you observe, is exceedingly delicate, and feels like silk. Of the three, the leaf in most repute is from '*la Vuelta de abaxo*,' *or the lower pass*. This is in the southern part of the island, where the soil is more finely mingled with sand, while its exposure is admirably adapted to the protection as well as the maturation of the plant."

"I suppose the tobacco is most eagerly sought after," observed the Surgeon.

"I have known the crop engaged and the purchase-money paid in hand three years in advance," was the reply.

"I protest against monopolies," interposed the Surgeon, taking another cigar from the case. "I can't permit you to smoke now," he added, seeing an involuntary motion of the other's hand; "too exciting to the nervous system;" carefully putting up the case. The Surgeon settled himself comfortably in the large arm-chair, and half closing his eyes, rolled forth a column of smoke that rose in a dense cloud above his head as the other went on as follows:

"The crop of this plantation had been engaged at a high price by Don Carlos, a wealthy merchant of the city; and when the time appointed came round, a large ship was dispatched to an inconsiderable port, in the vicinity of the Pass, which had been agreed upon as the point of delivery. On reaching his destination, the agent of the merchant found to his unutterable astonishment *two* vessels, already nearly freighted with the very tobacco he had himself been directed to receive on board. He landed without delay and sought the planter, who calmly told him that his employer had failed to comply with certain stipulations in the contract, and that having received an advantageous offer, he had disposed of the produce of his plantation to another merchant. Enraged at the barefacedness of this man, the agent returned to Havana with this intelligence. Don Carlos on learning that the purchase had been made by a rival house, between which and his own a misunderstanding, arising out of mercantile transactions, had long existed, he at once suspected that the planter had been tampered with, solely with a view to gratify the jealousy and hatred that rankled in the breast of his rival. His own contract having been a verbal one and without proper witnesses, the law offered no remedy. But the proud spirit of his race dwelt in the bosom of the old Don. The fire flashed from his eyes as he listened to the recital of his agent. Seizing his hat, he at once sought his competitor. He had but just descended into the street when, by an unlucky chance, he met his man, and with but little preface charged him with the baseness of his dealings. High words ensued, which resulted in a challenge from Don Carlos. They separated with mutual vows to meet immediately at a retired spot without the city walls. Don Carlos had long since lost his wife, and his only child was a son now verging on manhood. This young man had seen his father enter the house with an excited air and a quick step, and immediately reappear with his sword. Fearful that something serious had occurred, he followed at a distance, not daring to cross his father's humor at such a moment. On reaching an unfrequented spot where the antagonists were to meet, the young man had barely time to conceal himself, when he perceived a cavalier approaching with a hasty step and determined mien. The next moment, what was his horror when he recognized in this individual the father of his betrothed bride!"

As the stranger pronounced these words, an involuntary shudder shook his frame, and he covered his eyes with his hand. He, however, quickly regained his composure, and excusing himself on the plea that a sudden pang had shot through his shoulder, he resumed his narrative. "The young people," he said, "had long cherished the truest affection for each other; but owing to the coolness that existed between their families, had kept secret their affiance, hoping that a fitting occasion might ere long offer to obtain the consent of their parents.

"His antagonist had scarcely reached the ground, when Don Carlos cried out, 'Draw, sir, and defend yourself!' Then waving his sword haughtily in the air, he attacked his adversary with a vigor that greatly belied his age. The first impulse of the young man was to rush forward and throw himself between the combatants; but ere he had sprung from his cover, the foot of Don Carlos had slipped in the impetuosity of his onset, and his opponent's sword had passed through his body. The face of Don Carlos, as he fell, writhing with the anguish of foiled vengeance and the agony of his wound, was turned towards his son. At the same time the victor passed over the body of his prostrate foe, exclaiming with the wild malignancy of a fiend, 'Die, accursed dog! and know it was by my hand you fell.' With this he spurned the body with his foot and spat upon it.

"At the sight of this horrific act, consciousness forsook the young man, and the next moment his poniard was buried in the heart of his father's murderer. When his senses returned, he found himself kneeling over the beloved author of his being, with the reeking weapon clasped in both his hands. As he wildly called upon his father's name, the old man faintly raised his eyes, and smiling on his son, closed them again without speaking. To stanch the wound with his handkerchief, and then fly for aid, was the work of an instant. In a short time Don Carlos was carried home; and his wound having been examined by the surgeon, was pronounced dangerous, but not necessarily mortal. That same night the house of Don Carlos was fired by the son of the slain cavalier, with the intention of assassinating both father and son the moment they appeared from among the flames. At midnight, while the affectionate youth was hanging over the bed of his wounded parent, the flames, with startling fury, burst into the room. The son quickly wound his cloak around his left arm to ward off the falling fragments, and inspired with unwonted strength by the danger of the moment, caught up his helpless charge in the other arm, and made his way down the burning stairs to the door. Here, as he passed into the street, a man, shrouded in a cloak drawn about his face, struck at him with a dagger; thanks, however, to the firm texture of the cloak wound about his left arm, without effect. Striding past the assassin, who was overturned by the shock, he sought only to carry his precious burden to a place of safety. Having reached a house close by, he placed his wounded sire upon a couch, and strove with more than filial assiduity to mitigate the torture of the wound aggravated by so hurried a movement, and to assuage the excitement of his mind.

"Seeing that the old man was calm and reassured, the son, feeling for his stiletto, and assured that it was where it should be, descended into the street. A few steps brought him to a point where he beheld the building within whose walls he had first seen the light—the house with which the fondest recollections of childhood's joys and youthful happiness were associated, half consumed by the fierce element, and now presenting to his aching senses a mass of smouldering ruins. Not an article had been saved, not a relic rescued from the conflagration. So rapid, indeed, had been the work of the incendiary, that several of the domestics perished in the flames. The street was crowded; but the villain who committed the deed was nowhere to be found.

"Don Carlos suffered severely from alarm and hurried removal; and the next evening suddenly grew so much worse, that his son, leaving him in the hands of his friends, flew with the speed of the wind to seek the physician. While thus recklessly progressing, he, on turning a corner, came violently in collision with a cavalier who supported on his arm a lady deeply veiled. Both for an instant were staggered; but as the son of the wounded gentleman began to apologize for being so incautious, the other shouted in his ear, 'Ha! villain, you escaped me once, but you shall not now.' As he spoke, he released his arm from that of the lady, and drawing his poniard, hastily made a desperate stroke at the heart of his opponent. But the son of Don Carlos, with an eye quick and true as the eagle's, anticipated the blow. He caught the descending arm with his left hand, and the next instant his steel flashed as he raised his own right hand. The lady screamed and sprang forward to avert the blow, when the accursed weapon was buried to the hilt in her lovely bosom; and ere she fell to the earth, the ill-fated youth discovered that he had slain his own beloved Isabella."—Here the stranger's voice faltered, and his stalwart frame quivered with emotion. No one spoke, but Coburn sat uneasily in his chair, and smoked with great vehemence, while the eyes of Bell and myself were fixed upon the narrator with intense interest. In another moment the Spaniard resumed: "The cowardly brother fled for assistance, and on his return with the officers of justice, the unresisting lover was taken, weeping over the corpse of his betrothed. He was carried off insensible to prison: the following night he escaped, only in time to close the eyes of his dying father. He was concealed by his friends during the first ardor of the search, and here he had ample time to contemplate the depth of the calamity into which three short days had plunged him. In this brief period, reduced from affluence to poverty, bereft of the only relative on earth, and made the involuntary instrument of death to the being more dear to him than all the world beside.—"Oh! cursed," he cried, smiting his forehead, "thrice, three times, infinitely cursed be the wretch,"—and at that moment he registered a frightful vow, that his right hand should be bathed in the heart's blood of all who bore the name or claimed connection with the wretch, the author of his agonizing grief for the death of his betrothed bride."

Apparently appeased by thus giving vent to his passion, he proceeded: "The next night, leaving his hiding-place, the young man proceeded to that door to which he had been wont to fly on the wings of love, taking a fiendish delight in selecting for the execution of the deed he meditated the very spot where he had enjoyed so many secret interviews with his beloved Isabella; so completely had a savage thirst for blood banished all other sentiments from his mind. He had not long waited before his victim approached, when, springing forward, he shouted in his face, 'Hell-hound! thy hour has come!' He parried an ineffectual thrust, and seizing his opponent by the throttle with an iron grasp, thrust him against the wall, plunged a poniard into his breast, and with unabated malignity he continued to stab him until he could no longer raise the weapon, when the mangled body slipped from his relaxed gripe and sank to the earth."—A deep silence had prevailed in the room while the Spaniard narrated this fearful tragedy. As he concluded this sad tale, his mute auditors were aroused by the sound of a deep-drawn sigh, and turning towards the bed they perceived that the unhappy man, who had raised himself on his elbow as he drew to the close of his narration, had, as he uttered the last words, fallen back senseless upon his pillow. In this state he lay for some time, unaffected by the Surgeon's applications to restore him. When at last he revived, he languidly opened his large dark eyes, and turning to the Doctor, said in a low tone: "Your narcotic drugs have over-excited my nervous system; I have talked too much." It was apparent, however, to every one present that the heavy draughts of brandy he had taken during the absence of our party had overcome his reason, and doubtless led him to reveal a history of passion and crime which in his sober senses would never have been imparted to strangers. The surgeon imposed silence, and having given a sedative, recommended sleep: after which we bade him good night and retired.

The night was now far advanced. We returned to the Captain's sitting-room, all of us deeply impressed by the rehearsal of the history of this unfortunate but guilty man; for we were fully satisfied that the stranger had been himself the chief actor in the revolting tragedy, to the recital of which we had just listened. The name of Don Carlos having been substituted for the English name, "*Charles*," which his father bore. We here heard the third relief of the guard challenged by the sentinel on post near the Captain's quarters, which told us that it was one o'clock in the morning. The Doctor and I hastily bid the Captain good-night, and mounted our horses. I have written, dear H, till very late, and will close my letter. Adieu.

PENSACOLA, February.

DEAR H——: I closed my letter last night after recounting the exciting incidents of the previous day. I will now attempt to relate to you what occurred after Surgeon Coburn and your humble servant left the quarters of Captain Bell at one in the morning of the following day. Coburn merely lighted a fresh cigar, ere we mounted our horses and turned their heads towards Pensacola. Neither of us were much disposed to converse: for myself, I must say, my feelings had been much moved by witnessing the mental agony of the Spaniard while he related the passages of his early and much to be lamented career. What the Surgeon's meditations were, he did not seem disposed to communicate, and so we trudged along slowly through the deep sand in silence. The moon was high in the heavens, and, moving in a cloudless sky, diffused upon the plain through which our route lay a pure and mellow light, which, contrasting with the deep and distinctly delineated shadow cast by the pine forest which crowned the ridge on the left, far surpassed in beauty the broad glare of day shed by the orb whose rays were but reflected here. It was the hour in which the fairest visions of the lover rise and unfold to his enraptured mind a glowing picture of those ecstatic joys which are destined to reward the purity and constancy of his passion. But the most entrancing meditations, as well as the most tedious journey, must alike come to an end, as did ours on drawing up in front of the Surgeon's gate. I had bid him good-night as he entered his court-yard, but as I turned away I observed his horse plunge violently to one side, thereby somewhat endangering the bones of the rider, his master. At length, all the efforts of the Surgeon having failed to induce the brute to advance, he dismounted, and resolutely marched up to the object of his steed's aversion. Advancing a few steps, the brave little Surgeon himself was not a little startled at seeing on the ground a human head erect, with great goggle eyes, on which the moonlight gleamed, staring him full in the face. "Bless me!" he exclaimed, and in recoiling he ran against the outstretched nose of his trembling steed, whose bridle-rein, thrown over the animal's head, the Surgeon held in his hand. The startled horse was further agitated by this accident, and making simultaneously a snort and a bound, broke from the Doctor and scampered off to the stable. The Doctor then, with laudable spirit and alacrity, proceeded, accompanied by myself, to solve the mystery of this strange apparition. His afternoon's professional work had been obliterated from his memory by the unexampled incidents of the evening and night; and it was not until we had drawn quite near that he recognized in the apparition the features of his old friend, the soldier, whom he had so unceremoniously decapitated that afternoon, and had placed for safe-keeping in an empty apartment of the chicken-coop, in an adjoining division of which were two fine capons undergoing the fattening process, "*secundum artem;*" but how the head had found its way here he could not well conjecture. The riddle, however, was soon read: near the spot where the head of the soldier was found upright upon the cambric handkerchief, lay two dead fowls. These, the Surgeon, sorrowfully eying them, declared to be his own. "What scoundrel," he ejaculated, "has been depredating upon me?"

As absurdly ludicrous as the affair appeared to me, I managed to restrain my feelings; and I joined the Doctor in an expression of fixed and openly declared vengeance against the perpetrator.

It was very clear that the attempted robbery was the work of some thieving negro, although such acts are of rare occurrence here. It was evident that, having robbed the coop of the Doctor's fine capons, the fellow had discovered the white handkerchief carefully tied up; and regarding it as an "*area auri,*" lugged it off with the fowls. On reaching the open space where the full moon shed its bright light, impatient to examine his prize, he set down his plunder, and hastily untied the handkerchief.

The folds of the cambric fell off and left the head just as the Doctor had placed it, upright and facing the thief. The poor devil was no doubt a little more than half frightened to death, and made a precipitate retreat, leaving the "*spolia opima*" on the field.

CANTONMENT CLINCH.

DEAR H——: My last letter brought to a close the singular and somewhat strange and incongruous events that were crowded together in the day that witnessed the accident of the Cuban gentleman. Captain Bell rode into Pensacola on the following day, and I was unable to see him. Surgeon Coburn, however, informed me that his patient, with whom he had passed an hour in the course of the morning, was altogether better, and was as calm and self-possessed as he could desire. The following day the Captain called at my quarters and reported his guest as doing well. He told me that the gentleman had not referred to the disclosures he had made on the first evening; and that, consequently, he had learned nothing further of his history. The next day, when Bell returned from Pensacola, he at once handed me the following letter, written by his late guest, who, during the absence of the Captain the day before, had ordered his horse and taken his leave.

"SIR:—Estranged by feelings that have long been at war with the world, years have passed since I have sought or received kindness from my fellow-man. It is probable that we shall never meet again. But rest assured, sir, should fortune at any future time bring us together, the feelings which induce me to address you now, will then prompt me to express my gratitude more deeply than by words. You are acquainted with my sadly eventful life up to the hour we met.

I will not now deny what, in a moment of excitement, I revealed to you. I am, indeed, that unhappy man whose history I related to you under a feigned name; whose vow, years ago, was registered above. I go now to fulfil my vow. The son, a younger son, of my father's murderer, is at this hour with a vessel taking on board tobacco from '*The Lower Pass*,' the same leaf that caused my father's death and all my woe. I must meet him ere he reaches Havana. Then one or both of us must fall. My departure may not be deferred until your return. I beg you to accept the pledge of my sincerity, herewith. ANTONIO."

The Captain then produced a finger-ring, in which was a large diamond, richly and heavily mounted, which had been left on the table with the note. He also informed me that on inquiry of his servant he learned that, early in the afternoon, his guest had come down stairs, and said he was well enough to ride out. He ordered his horse, and mounting, rode away on the road to Blakely, and had not returned. From this information, and from Antonio's note, it was now almost reduced to a mathematical demonstration, that, for reasons hitherto unexplained to us, Antonio had appointed to meet Diego at Blakely, whence they were to sail to intercept the tobacco-vessel. And hence, too, the poignant disappointment Antonio had expressed on meeting with the accident which had detained him at the Cantonment; and also his eagerness to depart as soon as he had sufficiently recovered to be able to mount his horse.

Should our surmises, with regard to the connection of Antonio with Diego prove correct, we may shortly look for accounts of the meeting of Antonio with the son and brother of the men he had already slain. I shudder as I call to mind the narration of the misfortunes and crimes of this unhappy man; and still more when I see again in imagination that pale face and those noble features agitated by grief and the thirst for revenge as he pronounced the awful vow you have read in a former letter. If his crimes were great, his provocation was also great; and there was withal in his composition a gentle tenderness of heart manifested, which, had it been fostered under happier influences, would perhaps have made him an affectionate and beloved son, a loving and devoted husband and father, and a respected and admired member of society. Now, alas! his end, which I fear cannot long be deferred, must be marked by further crime and disgrace on earth for ever. If I hear more,—and more must shortly come to us,—I will write you.

PENSACOLA, February, ——.

MY DEAR H——: Some evenings past we had a very pleasant little party at Señora Oreo's. Carlota was as usual attractive and piquante. About eleven we retired, and I was quietly strolling to the hotel — (the night was superb, too delicious for sleep) — when, just as I was passing Coburn's retired domicil, an unearthly discord of diabolical sounds burst upon my tympanum. I stopped to listen as the sounds approached. The mingled blasts of tin horns, the rattling of tin kettles, the rolling of drums, the squeaking of fifes, the shouts of "*Cha-ri-va-ri*," augmented by the barking of dogs and the clattering of horses' hoofs, created such a fearful din as in my born days I had never before encountered; the awful clangor fairly startled the *evening land-breeze* as it floated in even measure towards the sea. The tumult had the effect to draw out from his cosy apartments the Surgeon and some one of his Pensacola cronies, possibly a patient; for this sage little disciple of Æsculapius, in spite of his gross eccentricities, was held in high esteem by the whole town as a physician of unequalled ability and sound judgment, and as a surgeon of great skill, as well as for his kind heart and generosity in visiting the sick whenever called for, without charge, for the constantly successful treatment of their various maladies.

After he had greeted me with his usual off-hand welcome, he turned to his companion, and asked what had thrown the whole town into such an uproar.

"It is," replied his friend, "a *Charivari.*" An old fellow, of Spanish blood, a widower, was married this morning to a pretty young Creole, and has probably just taken his young wife home. You are, perhaps, not acquainted with a custom of the people of Pensacola on the occasion of the marriage of a widow or a widower," said he, turning to me. On my replying in the negative, he continued: "The present subject, a widower, is a cross-grained, self-willed, obstinate churl, who will probably give his uninvited and unwelcome visitors no very courteous reception. One of two things he must do: either throw open his house and entertain the crowd to the best he has, or fight it out manfully to the last."

The *posse* was now approaching the spot where we stood. The numerous torches flaunted their saucy lights in the face of the chaste moon. The unruly mob, some mounted, some on foot, moved confusedly along towards the dwelling of their victim; while their voices were raised in an almost incessant shout of Charivari, accompanied by an instrumental din of unsurpassable grandeur. It would not have required any great stretch of the imagination to have set them down, with their hideous masks and not incongruous drapery, for a host of demons let loose from the dominion of Pluto.

Conspicuous among the mounted gallants were Pierre Le Rocher and Manuel Ricaneur, on their best horses. Having reached the centre of the spacious square, or Plaza, which was already well filled with the actors and spectators of this monstrous melo-drama, a personage of immense bulk, who appeared to exercise the authority of commander, in whom I soon recognized the dashing Pierre Le Rocher, not only by his well-known pied or "*paint*" horse, but also by his full sonorous voice, now rode rapidly about, calling his followers to attention. He wore a coat resembling the military, buttoned over his goodly paunch, around which a broad leather belt sustained his trusty weapon. A very small *chapeau*, with a cock-tail plume, completed his dress. Drawing his "*trusty*," Pierre with much vociferation brought his men into line. By his side, now Pierre's aide-de-camp reined up. He bestrode an old, raw-boned charger, scarcely fit for dog's-meat, every hair of whose tail had been shaven off, save a small lock at the end, from which was suspended a common cow-bell, which clanked in unison with his halt and crippled gait. Having enforced silence, the commander thus addressed the band:—

"Fellow-soldiers of the Hymeneal Torch! It affords me pleasure to express to you the entire satisfaction I have experienced in witnessing the orderly and becoming conduct and bearing you have exhibited on this trying occasion!" Deafening cheers here interrupted the speaker, who resumed: "In the discharge of the delicate trust you are about to enter upon, in the free exercise of your ancient customs and usages, do not pass the confines of austere decorum and propriety."

A burst of instrumental and vocal harmony, such as cannot well be conceived, followed this caution; after which the leader and his aide placed themselves at the head of the column, and moved at once to the house of the old Spaniard. The uproar was greatly magnified as they approached the door, being truly a summons

> "That broke his bands of sleep asunder,
> And roused him like a rattling peal of thunder."

The forces being arrayed in front of the house, which stood upon the street next the beach, looking out upon the bay, the commander's first act was to send a deputation of two to summon the bridegroom, and announce the arrival of the friends who had come to do honor to his nuptials. The announcement was made in due form, but without acknowledgment from those within. The leader, after waiting a reasonable time, reiterated his order:—

"Apply yourselves to the knocker again, my men!—the groom, perchance, diverteth himself with his young bride, and heedeth not your summons. He *must* be roused."

The command was obeyed with an energy that threatened the speedy destruction of the frail barrier which shut out the noisy troop of men from the peaceful domicil of the happy pair. Thus peremptorily admonished, the "*nouveau marié*" thought it prudent no longer to feign ignorance of an invocation, which, if repeated again, might bring his house about his ears. Accordingly the shutters of an upper window were thrown open without delay, and the assemblage below had the satisfaction of beholding the night-capped head of the little Spaniard thrust out upon the night, as he growled or rather roared out,—

"*Carrahoe punietara!* who dares disturb a peaceful house at this hour?"

He was made acquainted with the character of his visitors and their object by the knight of the shave-tail horse, who, spurring to the front, thus ceremoniously addressed him:—

"Most gallant Señor, your devoted friends, the *Knights of the Hymeneal Torch*, having with much pleasure learned that this morning's sun had smiled upon your nuptials for the *second time*, have hastened to offer to you their profound gratulations. And to prove to you how exceedingly they rejoice at the happy consummation of your desires, they have spared no pains in the preparations to celebrate these your nuptials agreeably to the ancient and respected usages of the Order. Me, they have commissioned to announce their purpose.

"Thou hast, therefore, most enviable groom and illustrious Señor, no more demanded of thee than to provide music and abundant good cheer, and these devoted knights and faithful soldiers will return, in the flashing of a flambeau, each accompanied by his adored fair one, to dance and make merry with thee till Phœbus, god of day, shall warn us to give over.—Have I said well, my merry men?" This appeal to his associates, already flushed by a sight of the game, was answered by a view-halloo and a deafening peal of instrumental music, in the midst of which the enraged Spaniard withdrew his head, and retired to vent his rage in the presence of his bride. The commander, the bold Pierre, nothing surprised or dashed at the reception of his gratulatory advances, coolly prepared to prosecute his undertaking.

With the sagacity of an able chief, he at once adopted such measures as he knew, if steadily persisted in, must in the end reduce the most restive recusant to terms. He accordingly detached a party to the rear of the house to prevent escape, having resolved regularly to besiege the obdurate Spaniard, and starve him into honorable capitulation. Having taken this precautionary step, he called a council of war, and with wonderful native dignity and ease gravely communicated his resolve to his subordinates; and then condescendingly asked their advice or approval of the course he had already in his own mind determined to carry out. Of course his plan of operations was unanimously agreed upon in council. In accordance therewith, a sufficient guard was left to prevent the escape of their prisoner, while the rest of the maskers paraded the streets in every direction, and with instrumental music of unearthly sounds, and songs descriptive of the low-souled meanness of the little bridegroom, they made the welkin ring. At every tavern or public house they halted, and put the landlord under contribution. Towards morning they returned to the house of their prisoner, where Pierre, having brought his troop into line, demanded a parley. In answer to an imperative summons at his door, the testy groom, without removing bolt or bar, called out to know what they had to say. "I have to inform you," returned Pierre, in his full, sonorous voice, "that the Knights of the Hymeneal Torch have come now, not as gentle cavaliers to offer their *devoir* at the celebration of your nuptials, but justly indignant at the rude reception they met with on the occasion of their first courteous visit; they are now here to demand of you compliance with an observance of ancient date in this town. Do you accede?"—"*Carrahoe!* No!" bellowed the little man; and then muttering to himself loud enough to be heard by those without, "*A dios, Señores,* I will see your torches burn out, and your false faces crumble, before I draw bolt to admit such rantipole runagates within my private dwelling. *A dios, Señores, a dios, a dios, a dios!*" and as he stalked away from the door, he continued to repeat his *congé* until the sound of his voice was lost. The flush of morning had already appeared over the eastern waters, and the maskers needing refreshment had retired, after expending the shafts of their low wit, and after levelling taunts and jibes enough at the front of his dwelling to have pulverized it, had it been more sensible to the force of their intellectual weapons than were the tough hide and obtuse sensibilities of its tenant, the plucky little groom. The latter had not failed to avail himself of the absence of his persecutors to reassure his bride, and to recover a little of his own equanimity. His tormentors, however, did not allow him a long respite. They had assembled on the Plaza after breakfast, and with renewed vigor moved down to the Bay. Again Ambrosio (for that was the Spaniard's name) was, after a flourish of tin horns and other jarring instruments, called to a parley. But again he positively refused to concede their demands, swearing he would starve before he would surrender. He had feared to attempt an escape, lest he should fall into the hands of the boisterous company. With great pertinacity, still he declined to yield to demands so galling to the pride and other ruling traits of his character, persuaded that his own tenacity would at length wear out the endurance of his persecutors. He had, however, to deal with a fellow equal in determination to himself, and of a recklessness that made him regardless of the pain he inflicted on others when his object required it. He had a good deal of that property or quality of mind which, when entered in a just cause and directed by wisdom and humanity, becomes one of the greatest virtues that adorn the character of man; but unguided by the dictates of good sense, benevolence, and propriety, soon learns to obey the promptings of the basest passions which lead into the mazes of folly and of crime. Satisfied, from the last interview with Ambrosio, that the latter would neither draw a bolt nor attempt an escape from his stronghold, he withdrew his forces quietly, and directing them to collect crow-bars, long and heavy beams and rollers, and to meet him with dispatch on the Plaza. Such, indeed, was the punishment he meant to inflict upon the hardened villain who had dared to bid defiance to his authority, that he feared, should his purpose transpire, the civil authorities would interfere and come to the rescue. Before dispersing, however, he said to his men: "I will be with you anon; with such a demonstration of good will to preserve the supremacy of your Order, that this surly caitiff shall incontinently throw himself upon your mercy, or meet a fate that will serve as an example to future generations of the danger of disputing your established rights and privileges." Some time passed before Pierre returned with his merry men, equipped as required. As he drew up in front of the house, before calling Ambrosio to a parley for the last time, he thus addressed his men: "True to your trust, your toils are near an end. You shall dance this night with the churl Ambrosio, or he shall sup to-night with Neptune, on shellfish as obdurate as himself." With this he ordered the usual summons to be sounded. But inured as it seemed by this time to the taunts of this insatiable and merciless crew, he received the summons with great apparent indifference. Meantime an ox-cart was slowly moving up the beach; it was approaching from that quarter of the town which was but little frequented. It was loaded with heavy unbarked rollers, freshly cut in the pine woods, and long levers similar to the rollers. These were tilted on the sand in silence, and the cart moved off. "To your duty now, my merry men; and let us see if Don Ambrosio's courage is water-proof." In a moment the rollers were immediately under the front of the house, and the levers in the rear were manned. But I may as well here give you, dear H——, an idea of the tenement that seemed to bid fair in a few minutes to be launched upon an unkindred element, and sent to sea without rudder or compass.

The dwelling, then, you must know, of the unlucky Ambrosio, was a light frame one of two stories, having but one apartment on each floor: the first of which was used in the double capacity of sitting-room and kitchen, and the second as bedroom and dressing-room. And although the former communicated with the latter by a kind of stair-ladder, the ostensible and by far preferable means of access to the upper room was, as is common in the town of Pensacola, by a single flight of uncovered stairs, the first step of which sprang from the pavement immediately on the right of the house, while the last gave elevation to a little platform upon which the chamber or bedroom opened. The whole fabric was raised and supported by four blocks of live-oak placed at the corners, and allowing a free circulation of air beneath; cellars in these sandy regions being of rare occurrence and less use. Such being the construction of the building, brief time was requisite to make the necessary arrangements in the rear. Other rollers were carried to the front, and laid at regular intervals to the water's edge. Everything was now ready, and the men only waited the signal from their popular leader to launch the household of Señor Ambrosio upon the briny deep.

"Stay, my friends," spoke the leader. "Before we proceed further, let us give the Don one more opportunity to recant. Summon him to the door."

The maskers, strongly prompted by the love of mischief, and eager to avenge an implied indignity, could with difficulty be restrained, and their call for Ambrosio was loud and imperious. Pierre waited a few moments for a reply; and it was not without some little concern that he discovered the total indifference and contempt with which this his last resort was regarded. Not that he wavered in resolution; but he had anticipated all along that this demonstration would bring Ambrosio to terms. The mob became unruly; the more violent of them swore they would wait no longer. Pierre seeing this, put spurs to his gallant steed, dashed at the stairway, and at the third bound was on the platform on the top. He raised overhead the heavy truncheon he held, and with the butt struck against the door. As Ambrosio had taken less precaution in fortifying this point than the rest of his castle, not dreaming an attack on his *sanctum sanctorum*, the lock gave way beneath the blow; the door flew open, and the horseman was revealed to the Spaniard at the very threshold of his bridal-chamber. The lady screamed; sparks of fire flashed from the husband's eyes, and a terrible oath escaped from his compressed lips, as with both hands he seized the chair upon which he sat and whirled it above his head. Pierre seeing that all idea of a parley under such circumstances was out of the question, settled himself in his saddle prepared to receive the assault. Although on a pinnacle of fearful height and diminutiveness, he had confidence in the firmness of his horse, and knew that one blow of his truncheon would demolish the weapon of his enraged antagonist. What would have been the result of this marvellous *rencontre* it is impossible to say, had not the bride, with a courage truly characteristic, sprung like a tigress between them, and winding her arms in no idle dalliance about her lord's neck, effectually checked him in full career. In vain the little hero raved and stamped: he was in the hands of one who, more than his match, had no desire to see his blood shed on his own hearth-stone.

"*Carrahoe!* will you not stand out of my way! Release me, hag! Devil, undo your arms, I say! Ambrosio will never suffer his house to be polluted while he can raise an arm or pull a trigger. Girl, *papita*, love, stand aside, and in the twinkling of an eye I'll hurl this dare-devil from his eminence!" But the lady was not to be moved by threats or entreaties; and having forcibly slid her arms over his shoulders, she succeeded in pinning the little Don, who, exhausted by the workings of his passions, dropped the chair from his clutch, and staggered back to a seat. Pierre taking advantage of the opportunity to expostulate, said aloud,—

"Listen to me, Ambrosio. One single rash act will be your ruin. I am here now, not as a persecutor, but as a friend. I have come to gratify no base feelings of petty revenge; but to warn you of the folly of resisting the demands of the people. They want but little further opposition to drive them to violence, and then it may not be in my power to check them. Decide then at once, either to submit to their terms, or abide their fury."

"*Carrahoe!* have I not told you my decision?" faltered the breathless man.

"Are you aware," said Pierre, firmly, that your house is at this moment on rollers, and the impatient people but wait my signal to launch it into the bay, without remorse?" Ambrosio looked doubtingly. "Examine for yourself, my friend," said Pierre.

The Spaniard walked to the window, and throwing open the shutter, beheld the demoniac crowd below stationed at the levers. The peril, in which he beheld his property stood, and which he was now for the first time apprised of, staggered his resolve, and wrought a change which no personal danger could have effected. His wife, who from the beginning of this affair had been in favor of his compliance with the will of the populace, again came forward. She had more strength of mind as well as more command of temper than her fiery little protector. She took him modestly by the hand and said,—

"My friend, you will not deny me the first demand I make on your love. Consent to humor your townsmen; and I will make ready to receive them immediately. Come, you will not refuse me—all will be well."

A convulsive tremor passed over the face of the stout-hearted husband; and taking his wife by the hand, he turned to Pierre and said,—

"I can do no more: manage the matter as you like;" and turning away, he threw himself upon a chair at the farther end of the room.

Pierre now dismounted, and turning his horse's head about, touched him on the flank with his truncheon. The true-footed animal descended with the ease and agility of a cat. Pierre then entered the room, and approaching Ambrosio, said in a soothing tone,—

"You are a brave man; and I cannot but admire your conduct. You shall lose nothing by this affair. I pledge myself to make these fellows conduct themselves with all propriety. You will be prepared to receive them at an early hour."

So saying, he left the room and descended to his men. "You are victorious, my lads," said he: "the Don admits your supremacy, and will be ready to entertain you as noble cavaliers, as soon as you can get yourselves ready and collect your sweethearts. So vanish and deck yourselves for the ball; but first toss these logs into the bay, and let them go down with the tide."—In a few hours the walls of the long room in a building next to Ambrosio's were lighted, and were resounding to the music of a good band, and the gay Creoles were gliding through the intricacies of the Spanish contra-dance, and the ever varying figures of the waltz. The bride was all smiles. The groom all dignity. Pierre was there as Patron, in a full suit of black.

All the actors in the late scene now had assumed their proper garb, and those who had lately been the most turbulent advocates of violence were now the most *enjouès* promoters of mirth and good-humor.

The flexible and ever happy Creole girls were smiling, and as much at ease as if the entertainment had been the spontaneous effusion of the "*bon naturel*" instead of the compulsory requisition of a self-constituted authority.

CANTONMENT CLINCH, February.

DEAR H——: A few evenings since I was invited to a "*petit souper*" at the hospitable domicil of our learned friend, Surgeon Coburn. He had invited Captain Bell and myself to meet Mr. McGregor, a thorough-bred Scotchman, from Glasgow. The Doctor and himself were intimate friends, though two persons more unlike in some respects would not be met with in a long summer's day.

There were, however, certain traits alike in both, which in persons of the same sex beget friendship, just as they in persons of different sexes beget love at first sight. Be that as it may, there was a genial feeling between them; and though they often differed, as was inevitable, yet they were always firm friends.

Premising so much, I will only say that the Captain and myself reported at the hour appointed, and the Scotchman appeared soon after.

"Ah! Mac," cried the Doctor, as the former entered the room, "happy to see you. Hope you're well, as I have a little treat in store for you that will make your eyes sparkle, if there is any spirit of Epicurus in you."

"Well, I assure you, I'm happy to wait on you," returned, laconically, the Scot; and then added, "I'm all impatience to learn what novelty the prolific brain of my friend Surgeon Coburn has ushered into being."

"Ah! ah! In due time you shall see; but it is not time yet. I took a look at Robert, in the kitchen, just now; for although no one disputes his ability in his particular line, yet, if I have anything extra or peculiar, I like to have it done under my own supervision."

So saying, he took off his coat, rolled up his shirt-sleeves, and pinning a large towel in front of him, repaired to the kitchen.

"What in the name of wonder, Captain," said McGregor, "is the Doctor going to give us for supper?"

"The Lord knows," said Bell, laughing; "the preparation indicates something extraordinary; time only will enlighten us. The Doctor sometimes likes to take his friends by surprise."

No one seemed disposed to talk; the Scot poked the fire impatiently with his cane; Bell hummed to himself scraps of catches; and for myself, I was employed in conjecturing what new dish we were to be regaled with. At length the little man made his appearance, with a face like a full moon, smiling with self-approbation, and reddened by the heat of the kitchen-fire. Having resumed his coat and gulped a glass of wine, he said, with that eagerness of articulation which at times he exhibited when hugely excited, but never otherwise,—

"It—it—it's hot work, Mac; but I—I hit it to a turn. The old dog Apicius might wish he hadn't hanged himself, could he get a sniff of that roast."

"Roast what?" inquired the Scot, with eagerness.

"Thou shalt see anon; thou shalt see di—directly."

In a few minutes the door opened, and black François entered with a tureen of *gombo filé*, a special favorite in the South. Few words passed during the first course; the soldiers doing honor to the host's science; and the Scot, nothing loth to pay his *devoir*, highly extolled the dish as it was removed; and, indeed, to do the Doctor but justice, there were few better cooks than himself. As the wine passed round after the "gombo," the host—having suffered a bumper to glide slowly down his gullet—hemmed thrice, and addressing himself more particularly to his friend Mac., said,—

"The bird and its accompaniments, which you are now to discuss, I received as a valuable present from my particular friend Monsieur La Rue, who, as you probably are aware, resides in the country near the head of Escambia Bay."

As he finished speaking, François placed before his master a large dish, on which was a wild goose,—a noble bird indeed,—evidently one that had been trapped and fattened by the person from whom it came. McGregor silently expressed his admiration of the fat goose; but he could not conjecture, with his slight experience of the customs of the country, and his imperfect knowledge of its *cuisine*, what were the white, very white pieces, apparently of flesh, with which the goose was surrounded. He, however, preserved a deferential silence, trusting to the kindness of his host to explain. "I have already said," resumed Coburn, "I received yesterday from my friend La Rue a wild goose and a brace of *fine rattlesnakes.*"

"The devil you did!" interrupted, rather vehemently, *the* McGregor. And the astonished Scot, setting down his wine-glass rather suddenly, shivered it into a thousand atoms.

"Even so, Mac," replied the Surgeon with imperturbable gravity; "I ate them at my friend's house not a month ago, and permit me to inform you, that the animal is a *bonne bouche* for Epicurus himself."

"Very possibly," replied the Scot, with equal gravity; "but may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, and my jaws forget their office, if ever I incontinently taste so vile a reptile. Pah! give me a glass, François. Captain, I'll thank you for the wine."

"Mr. McGregor," said the Surgeon, a little nettled at his friend's obduracy, "you only expose your ignorance by contemning the light which modern philosophy has thrown on the science of gastronomy. As the art of eating among the Romans was the most gross and luxurious, so is the science of the French of the present day the most refined and delicate, and founded on the strictest rules of Hygiene and social enjoyment. And as snails and bullfrogs are acknowledged dainties at the tables of the most fastidious, you, sir, have no right to deny the rattlesnake that place among the rarer viands of this country, which the whiteness and tenderness of its flesh, and the deliciousness of its flavor, must ever entitle it to hold."

McGregor first deliberately helped himself to wine, and then replied, without turning towards his host,—

"Plain fare is sufficient for me."

Coburn eyed him for a moment as if about to retort;

but his *bonhomie* getting the better of his pique, and seeing, from his friend's calm countenance, there was little prospect of converting him to the orthodox view of the matter; and, besides this, the goose and its garnishment were in danger of getting cool, he deferred further argument for the present. With the winning manner which he could assume when it pleased him, he offered his friend a piece of the breast of the goose, saying it was the part farthest from the reptile. The Scot politely accepted this proffer of reconciliation, and peace and good feeling were at once restored; in fact, the two men respected each other too much to entertain for more than a moment an unkindly feeling towards one another. The Captain and myself both declared in favor of the reptile; he, from taste, having eaten of it before; I, from curiosity. Our host, thus supported in favor of his *thesis* by two against one, soon lost all sense of displeasure which the unguarded expression of his friend had engendered. He ate heartily himself; he enlarged, unopposed, on the lights of science; and the Scot giving in to the humor of the hour, a pleasant kind of wit in which our host was unsurpassed, and merriment, in which all participated, crowned the evening's entertainment.

CANTONMENT CLINCH, February.

DEAR H——: Ever since I became acquainted with the history of that unhappy but guilty Cuban, Antonio, in whose impending fate I could not, in spite of myself, but entertain an intense interest, I have carefully examined the Havana journals which reach us by casual arrivals once or twice a fortnight, for information that would throw light upon his movements since he took his departure from Captain Bell's quarters. At the hotel yesterday morning, as I took up the latest paper from the Cuban capital, an article at once caught my eye which I will translate for you, though perhaps you are a more finished Spanish scholar than myself.

The caption of the article was in large capitals and in these words:—

"CAPTURE AND DEATH OF THE NOTORIOUS PIRATE ANTONIO MOZELA, ALIAS RAMON CHUMPA.

"The particulars as we have received them are as follows: Don Adolphus Bahia, a wealthy merchant of this city, having purchased the crop '*de tabacos de la Vuelta de Abaxo,*' had sailed in a fine bark, in order to be present at the taking on board of this valuable tobacco, which he was anxious to see carefully bestowed. His voyage had been in every respect successful, when on the morning of the 5th inst., while entering the harbor, and almost under the guns of the Moro Castle, the vessel was hailed by a small schooner, which, the wind being light, came alongside, and calling to the man at the helm, asked if they might have a small keg of water, as they had been twenty-four hours without a drop. Don Adolphus being on deck at the time, went to the side of the vessel where the schooner was holding on. The moment he showed himself above the rail of the bark, the pirate sprang on board, and with a fearful execration attacked Don Adolphus with a stiletto. The latter was not slow to draw his weapon and defend himself. The pirate closed upon him; the two at once clenched each other, and before the captain of the bark reached the deck of his vessel, they had fallen to the deck locked in each other's arms. When separated, Don Adolphus was discovered to be already dead, having been pierced through the heart. The hardened pirate was dying from a similar wound, and lived but a few moments after he was separated from his victim; but ere he breathed his last, he raised himself on his elbow, and looking up towards heaven, cried with an exulting voice, 'I am satisfied! the last scion of that accursed house has perished by my hand!' With the last expiration of these words he fell back dead.

"In the meantime the schooner had shoved off, and taking advantage of the slight breeze which scarcely filled the sails of the bark, was out of reach before the confusion caused by the death of Don Adolphus had subsided on board. We regret to have to state that the rest of the pirates escaped. Whether any cause of enmity towards the house of Don Adolphus existed, is not known; but this is the second vessel of Don Adolphus, loaded with the tobacco from 'the lower Pass,' that has been attacked within a few years past. In the former instance the crew were allowed to take their boat; but the vessel, with her cargo, was burned. It was stated at the time that this same pirate Antonio led the party, but nothing positive was known."

Having read this sad, but not altogether unlooked-for termination of a life not long but full of woe, I ordered my mare Kate, and rode to the cantonment with the paper. I knew that Captain Bell had caused inquiry to be made for Diego, but up to the last time I saw him, without success. He, Diego, had not returned to his dwelling; nor had his wife been seen there for a long time. After reading the notice in the Havana paper, Bell told me that the man he had employed to hunt up the traces of the missing man Diego, had reported to him on the day previous, that a half-breed Indian, who had at different times been employed as a boat-hand by Diego, had been, within a day or two, seen in Pensacola, but had denied knowing anything of the latter. Bell had then caused the man to be brought to him. He said, this man had been with him for an hour just before my arrival; that he had taken down in writing what the half-breed had, after much prevarication and unwillingness to tell what he knew, confessed. I will give you the substance of what Bell had taken in writing. The Indian acknowledged that he and another had been with Diego when Señor Antonio had the interview with him. That when the latter came on board their fishing-smack below the Barranca, it was arranged that the vessel was to proceed to Blakely, where Antonio was to meet them. They arrived at the port, and waited one day before Antonio came on board. That, as soon as he arrived, he handed Diego a heavy purse of gold: nothing was said by either, but the anchor was weighed and they sailed immediately. On arriving off the entrance to Havana, they lay to till the next morning, when they saw a vessel coming in. Sail was made, and the little schooner came alongside of the vessel and held on with a boat-hook. That, after asking for water, Señor Antonio leapt on board, and they were all to follow him; but Diego's heart failed him, and letting go the vessel, he put the helm down, and left Señor Antonio fighting on board the strange vessel. What became of him, they did not know. That Diego steered for the mouth of the Perdido. On arriving there, they moored their schooner; and his companion was left in charge, while he, the informer, was directed to accompany Diego to his house. On the way he heard a rifle-shot, and at the report Diego fell. On looking round he perceived a Mus-ko-ghe emerge from the thicket, who motioned to him not to fly, as he was his friend. When the Indian came up, he informed the half-breed that Diego had attempted his life, and he pointed to a wound on the upper part of his shoulder, and then to the spot in front where the bullet had been taken out. He then examined the body, for life was already extinct, and took from Diego's belt, the purse he had received from Antonio. Then drawing his knife, he took the scalp from the prostrate body, and without saying more, strode off in the direction from which he had advanced. The half-breed then proceeded to Diego's house, and told his wife what had happened. He remained there that night; but when he rose in the morning, the woman had disappeared, and had not since been seen. As soon as the Captain had received the half-breed's narrative, he dispatched Jupiter on a good horse, to visit the spot as described and ascertain the truth. On his return, Jupiter confirmed the man's statement; whereupon the Captain sent with Jupiter a soldier in a light wagon for the body, and had given directions for its proper interment in the Catholic burial-ground. You will not fail to recognize in the Indian who shot Diego the Mus-ko-ghe who was wounded by him on the day I rode with Carlota and Josephine to the mouth of the Bayou Grande, and the scene we there witnessed.

As I found that Bell was much impressed with these occurrences, and not disposed to converse, I bade him good-day, and rode back to town, where I called on Carlota, and related to her the denouement of the story of which she had previously heard something.

PENSACOLA, February 26, 1823.

DEAR H——: Some few days ago, orders came from Washington, directing four companies of our Regiment, under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Geo. M. Brooke, to proceed to Tampa Bay, and establish a Military Post, within the territory of the Seminole Indians, at some point on the navigable waters of the Bay. Transports have been ordered to be sent from New Orleans; and it is understood that a brig and a topsail schooner will be at Pensacola immediately, to take the troops on board. I have only just now been notified that the company to which I belong is one of those selected for this service. Little time have I to take leave of friends, and pack up for the voyage. The latter is an affair of little interest; but I shall feel deeply the parting with many friends I have had the good fortune to meet with here. Foremost of these are Surgeon Coburn, who, as I believe I mentioned to you, is the senior surgeon of this district, and *Medical Director*, and from whom I have received much very valuable instruction, besides kindnesses without end; and Capt. Bell, who has wound himself so completely round my heart that I know not how to part from him. Carlota will take my hand, and laughing roguishly bid me take care of myself; but will shed no tears. Adieu.

ESPIRITU SANTO BAY, March.

MY DEAR FATHER:— . . . . We sailed on the 27th of February, at noon. My company had the good fortune to be with the head-quarters, Lieutenant-Colonel Geo. M. Brooke, on board the brig *William and Henry* of Boston, Capt. Wainwright, a fine vessel and well supplied.

Three of the companies were on the brig; the fourth was on the topsail schooner *Rachael* of New York: both of which vessels had just delivered freight from their respective ports at New Orleans.

We were soon at sea, with light breezes; the weather delicious.

Late at night—when most of the officers had retired—I went on deck to take a look at the weather, before *turning in* to my berth.

It was a lovely night; the vessel was gliding along moderately on her course, almost without motion; the temperature mild; my mind was full of anticipations of novel service in the heart of the Indian country, and of the pleasures I should enjoy in the chase.

All was bright; all was calm, save the gentle ripple of the sea upon the cut-water of the vessel; all was silent, save the murmur of the sails as they bent to the light breeze. "What a heavenly scene! What a sea! and what a sky!" I breathed to myself. But when we are happy,—and *then* I was happy,—all that we look upon is reflected in the bright mirror of our own hearts. I sat down to muse over the past and the future as it loomed out before me. Anon came that light slumber which steals insensibly over the senses; refreshing the wearied frame, while it leaves the ever active mind to sport in sunny fields where the asperities of life are softened and subdued by the misty veil which imagination throws over their rugged features. O! dreams of blessed security; so alluring are thy visions, they make us sometimes wish that half our life were passed in such sweet slumbers. The next day the weather thickened; the wind began to blow; the sea grew rough and rougher; the vessel was decidedly uncomfortable, and the odor of the bilge-water coming from the disturbed lower regions was scarcely tolerable to one from the balsamic pine forests around the quiet bay of Pensacola. I found the atmosphere below deck was anything but inviting; I repaired on deck; and in a little while you might have seen most of the land-officers manfully maintaining their dignity by walking scientific zigzags on deck; while others sought quiet, even on a hen-coop. The "*ensemble*" was to me ludicrous enough. This was my second voyage, and I almost considered myself—when it moderated a little—quite a "*sea-dog.*" As night approached, it came harder upon us; and as Captain Wainwright calculated that we were about opposite the mouth of Espiritu Santo Bay, he reported to the Colonel that he should "*lie off and on*" till daylight. A pretty disagreeable night we had of it, I assure you, for it blew *great guns*. About eight o'clock in the morning, as we returned from one of our "offs," as the captain called them; meaning, I presume, stearing off the land, while "*lying on*," I conclude, was coming back on the same track, or in our case, on the same latitude. In land phrase, then, I will say, as we approached the land, the captain, who proved to be a fearless sailor as well as a cautious one, having confidence in his reckoning, and seeing from the masthead what looked like an opening in the coast, ran in till we could see the mouth of the Bay, and breakers running half-mast high on each side. This he considered a sufficiently favorable time to run in, which he did, in fact, beautifully, and no doubt skilfully. I believe all hands were well pleased when he cast anchor inside a well land-locked harbor. Here we lay at anchor several days, while an exploring party set out, in the yawl, to look for signals of the presence of Colonel Gadsden, a United States Engineer, who had been ordered from Washington to proceed to San Augustine, and thence cross the peninsula to the Gulf coast at the head of this Bay, where he was to examine the surrounding country, with a view to selecting the site of the military post ordered to be established. The Bay of Espiritu Santo, at the distance of five-and-twenty miles from its mouth, branches; the western or principal arm is Tampa, and the eastern, Hillsborough Bay. Upon the point of land separating these arms, the party in the boat discovered a staff erected on the beach, having a small piece of muslin flying from its head. On landing, they found fastened to the post a letter from Colonel Gadsden, addressed to Colonel Brooke, saying that he was encamped at the mouth of Hillsborough River, at the head of the bay of that name, where he would await the arrival of Colonel Brooke. The party then returned to the brig, which they reached about sunset. The next morning the Colonel ordered the yawl alongside, and with his Adjutant and Quartermaster proceeded to the mouth of the Hillsborough to meet the Engineer. In the meantime several of the officers, including myself, took our guns and one of the boats, to explore the islands. We first visited Egmont on the south of the channel.

The growth is live-oak, red cedar, and the palmetto or cabbage tree, whose shafts were some of them about forty or fifty feet in height. These trees were sparsely scattered over the island, except near the centre, where the live-oak and cedar form quite a "*hummock*" or thick wood. We found "*sign*" of deer, though none were seen; but the gray pelican, several species of gulls, and great numbers of crows were observed. I was at once struck with the manners and the voice of the crows, which appeared to me to be quite distinct from those of our Northern bird, and its size seemed less. [*Note by the editor in* 1867. This shows close observation. It was the "*Fish Crow*," *Corvus Ossifragus* of Wilson.]

Little occurred of interest for several days during the absence of the Colonel. On referring to my journal, I find:—

February 28. At sea; weather rough and very disagreeable.

February 29. Made entrance of Espiritu Santo Bay and ran in. Schooner *Rachael* followed.

March 1. Boat party sent to look for United States Engineer; returned at sunset with letter from him found twenty-five miles up the bay.

March 2. The Colonel takes boat for mouth of Hillsborough to confer with him.

Went ashore on Millet Key; saw three deer, but did not get a shot. The interior shore of this island, for half a mile or more, is covered with the mangrove, which grows and flourishes in the sand from one hundred feet beyond high-water mark (on the very slight or almost imperceptible rise in the land) to the very verge of low-water mark. The limit to which the growth of this plant is confined is within a cove of the extent above stated, where the spawn of the oyster (such as may escape from the vast beds which cover a large part of the bottom of the interior of this noble bay of Espiritu Santo) are collected, and floating on the ebb tide attach themselves to the *root-extending branches* of the mangrove, by the glutinous matter which covers their exterior; and as they grow in size are found, as it were, *growing on trees!* I gathered some of them about three inches long from branches which, as the tide was falling, were from twelve to fourteen inches above water; and as the tide was still falling would, of course, before the flood be still further from their natural element. I opened three with my hunting-knife and found them full of water, so tightly were the shells closed, which of course sufficed to sustain life until the next tide. As I was passing around this cove, it was about lunch-time, so I walked into the shallow water and opened and ate about a dozen of the best of them. They were well flavored, though not *fat oysters.*

The mangrove is propagated by seed, and throws out its root-branches to seaward, forming a closely connected mass of branches and roots, extending, as I have said, to low-water mark; and so closely intermingled at top, that a man may proceed by half-climbing, half-walking, as far as his inclination or purpose may lead him, without descending to "*terra firma*" or salt water. I may truly say I was much interested in much that I saw, and returned to the brig at close of day, having had a day of pleasure to be remembered.

March 3. Col. Brooke still absent; but the Quartermaster has returned, with orders for the troops to disembark on the point which separates the arms of the bay, and thence march to the mouth of Hillsborough River, where it is decided to establish the post. The vessels will move up in the morning. A party of officers went ashore to-day and killed a fine buck.

March 4. We have landed, and will soon march about four miles to the position we are destined to occupy. The vessels are "*lightening,*" and will be discharged as soon as they shall have discharged our camp equipage and subsistence stores.

March 5. We are encamped on rising ground, where the river comes into the bay at right angles with the shore. All hands on fatigue-duty, clearing the ground in our rear of dense undergrowth, but leaving all trees (they are magnificent live-oaks) untouched. The work progresses finely, the men working with a will.

March 6 *to* 15. Every day like the one preceding. Troops in the pine woods cutting timber, for log quarters for officers and barracks for the men.

FORT BROOKE, Head of Hillsborough Bay, March 28.

MY DEAR FATHER:—We have now been established here, I may say, about a month. We are encamped on a point of elevated land lying between the mouth of Hillsborough River and the bay of that name—near its head. Our camp extends under a canopy of the most superb trees I ever beheld; and as the temperature is from 75° to 80° Fahrenheit, you may readily conceive how delightful is the noontide shade they afford. These giant live-oaks throw out their huge limbs at a distance of six to ten feet from the ground; these enormous limbs, as large as the trunks of common trees, extend in an almost horizontal direction for ten or fifteen feet, then spreading and rising to the height of fifty or sixty feet, form a dense round head that is a perfect *parasol*. Their great limbs and their smaller branches are hung with long pendants of the Spanish moss, and with festoons of the yellow jessamine which has been in bloom, with clusters of bright-yellow flowers, ever since we have been here. The progress of the work is quite satisfactory. The walls of the men's barracks are already eight or nine feet high; they will be about twelve feet, to give the free circulation of air so essential in a hot climate.

These buildings are of pine logs, and are raised by notching the logs down, one upon another. The quarters for the officers will not be commenced until the barracks for the men are roofed in and floored. We had quite an excitement in the camp a few days ago, which was allayed or terminated in as sudden and mysterious a way as it had arisen.

At about half past nine in the morning of the day I alluded to, the sentinel at the point of land between the river and the bay shore, who had standing orders to report the approach of all vessels as soon as they came in sight, called out, "*Sail ho!*" The word was instantly repeated at the body of the guard, and in a few moments officers and men were upon the open space overlooking the bay, eagerly gazing seaward with their telescopes at several distant sails that in a few hours would bring them news from home and the world at large. Big Corporal Lambert, the Colonel's cockswain, was seen striding along, full of importance, towards head-quarters, to ask if the Colonel would have his twelve-oared barge out and go on board. He was gratified by being told to have his boat and boat's crew in apple-pie order in half an hour.

The Colonel, with his telescope in hand, then joined a group of officers collected at a point where they had a fair view of the distant but slowly approaching vessels, examining with their glasses the changes of position they underwent. Four—now five sail are distinctly discernible. Some of the gentlemen even pronounced one of them a topsail schooner, another a brig. "But what could have brought so many transports together?" was sagaciously asked by one. "Perhaps more troops are coming to reinforce us," another replied. "Or a six months' supply of subsistence and forage," suggested a third.

"I should not be at all surprised," said the Colonel, "to find General Scott, who is known to have been on a visit of inspection in the Southern States, now a passenger on one of them. Gentlemen, be pleased to shave, dress, and be ready to accompany me in my barge in half an hour. We will meet the General and his staff, and give them a cordial welcome in the style he likes so well."

All gave another lingering look with the glasses; and all were well satisfied that, whoever was on board, the vessels would be at anchor in the mouth of the river ere two or three hours had passed.

The officers repaired to their tents and put themselves in full uniform, while the Colonel, having also donned his best suit, ordered refreshments to be prepared, and made all requisite arrangements to receive his distinguished guest. At length the officers began to assemble at head-quarters, and as the Colonel came forth from his tent, they moved with stately step towards the wharf, where the splendid double-banked barge, made in New York expressly for the commanding officer of this post, after specifications forwarded by the Colonel, lay with her crew, in their white shirts and trousers and round hats, on board, with oars in hand ready to "*let-fall*" at the word. The Colonel was just in the act of stepping into the stern-sheets, where eight or ten persons could comfortably sit, when some one in a startled voice cried out, "*Where, where are the vessels!*" All regards were simultaneously directed down the bay. Men rubbed their eyes and could not yet believe them. Bewildered countenances were turned on each other, asking an explanation no one ventured for a few moments to express; until Colonel Brooke, drawing a long breath, ejaculated, "MIRAGE! *as I live!*" and with a good-natured laugh added, "Fairly caught, gentlemen; but come to head-quarters and we will discuss the refreshments prepared for our beloved General, as well as this wonderful phenomenon, Mirage."

That at this discussion various opinions were offered respecting mirage, I do not doubt; one only, I will undertake to say, respecting the Colonel's refreshments, for no one is more liberal or more amiable than he; and though he, as well as others, may have his weak points or queer conceits, which are as undisguised as they are harmless, yet his many sterling qualities will always gain him the affection and warm regard of those around him. All this was the universal subject of conversation when I returned in the evening from fatigue-duty down the bay, on which I had been employed that day. On inquiring of those about me at what hour the mirage had been seen, and the direction in which it had appeared, I was fortunately enabled to throw some light upon the subject,—I mean as to its immediate and direct cause.

Immediately after reveille, I went out with a party of axe-men to cut pine logs for the buildings. A tract of land, where the kind of timber desired was abundant, was immediately on the north shore of the bay, about two miles below our camp. The custom of the soldiers, when going out on this duty, is to take simply their bowl of coffee, which is prepared before reveille, and, without further delay, to march out to work. After working till about nine o'clock, they have half an hour for breakfast. As I always observe the same rules in this respect as are maintained by my party or command, I had ordered the work to cease at nine o'clock; and, after making my own breakfast, I took up my gun and walked down to the water's edge. Here was a high, rocky point, and extending out from it was a sand-spit of several hundred yards in length; the tide was at the time out, and this spit was bare of water, and covered with a thin veil of fog or mist. On reaching the water's edge, I discovered, through the mist, five sandhill cranes on the end of the sand-spit, feeding on the small molluscs and salt-water insects left by the receding tide. Thinking that I might, by advancing cautiously, get within range of these fine fowls without attracting their attention, I stepped upon the sand, and had approached almost within the range of my double-barrel, when the cranes, alarmed by the appearance of an enemy, however indistinct through the mist, took wing; and at the same hour the five vessels, which had been seen in the exact direction, as afterwards ascertained by the compass, likewise took wing, and disappeared or vanished from the bewildered gaze of Colonel Brooke and his officers, and the whole camp. The former comprehended the phenomenon; but of the latter there were many who talked much of the spirits of a ship's crew reported to have been murdered by pirates off the mouth of the bay not very long before.

The mirage I accounted for in this way: the light mist which enveloped the cranes, owing to its moisture, or, in other words, owing to the vapor contained in the lower stratum of the atmosphere, that layer was less dense than the superincumbent layers; and the rays of light coming from the sun, at that hour of the morning, in an oblique direction, and meeting in this mist the surface of a less refracting medium, were thence returned to their original medium at an angle that caused the images (*i. e.* the cranes) to appear higher than in reality they were. I say images; because in mirage, as you, of course, know, there are two of the same object, the one erect, the other inverted, like the image of a ship and its shadow in the water below. But I have run this letter out to a long yarn, and will close with a gentle good-night.

P. S.—I believe I mentioned that Colonel Gadsden begged leave to name this embryo station "*Fort Brooke,*" in honor of our commanding officer; and the latter returned the compliment by naming the point of land which separates the two bays, and where the Engineer's letter was found, "*Gadsden's Point.*"

CAMP BROOKE, Head of Hillsborough Bay.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Summer is advancing on us in earnest, and no little concern is manifested in some quarters as to the prospect before us of a healthy season. We are in the middle of May, and thus far, I can say, the climate has been unexceptionably good; the daily changes in the weather, or rather, I should say, hourly changes, are as regular as is the circuit described by the hands of a town-clock. *Par exemple*, the record of one day, which I will give you, will answer for every day for a month:—Morning, bright and cheering; noontide, too sultry for pleasure in out-of-door work; afternoon, invariably a heavy shower for half an hour; followed by sunset, clear and serene; and night, perfectly glorious. But the wiseacres say, "Can you from this tell what will come in August or September? We are at the junction of fresh and salt water, which is not favorable to health." In fact, I believe there have arisen in the minds or imaginations of some gallant men, who have unflinchingly faced death in battle, phantoms of miasmata, of noxious exhalations from unseen and unknown marshes, of local causes of yellow fever, and other fatal maladies which exist only in their own excited brains; and, in consequence, the desolation of the hour that *may* be in store for us all.

To these croakers I pay no regard. I hunt deer—for there are *always* some in season in this latitude—whenever the spirit of Nimrod comes over me, regardless of the sun; and I fish or ride whenever I am not on duty, either fatigue duty in the forest, or under arms in camp. By the by, the lower bay is the finest oyster-ground on the continent. You will say, "That is a bold assertion;" but, in good faith, I have not eaten such oysters anywhere. A boat's crew is detailed from the command twice a week, and they never fail to procure enough for all. The fishing is also marvellous, and I am really unwilling to stake my credibility on a statement of the quantity and quality of fish sometimes taken by a single haul of the seine; but I will say, I have been out with a crew of seven men, (cockswain and six oarsmen,) when within one mile of camp we have hauled a good, large seine, and as it was drawn into shoal water, it was found to be so loaded with redfish that the men could not drag it further; and I walked into the water with five of the men, while two on shore held the ends of the seine, and carried out fish from fifteen to twenty pounds, until the remainder could be hauled in; and this was a thing of not very unfrequent occurrence. The finest fish caught here are the "*redfish*" and "*sheep's-head;*" but many others are abundant, namely, drum, flounder, sole, mullet, sea-trout, &c., &c.

When, as frequently, you may find a shoal of redfish near shore; if you have a *throw-out* line, with a slip of salt pork-skin on the hook, you may have the finest sport in hauling in the largest and best fish,—as I have already remarked, redfish weighing twenty-five or thirty pounds,—until you become fatigued with the labor of prosecuting a diversion so attractive to one who is devoted to field sports. To convey to you some idea of the fish brought in twice a week, I will only say, that, on return of the fishing detail, the boat in tow, into which the fish are thrown when taken, is unloaded and the fish laid out on the wharf. The fish-call is sounded, and the orderly sergeants appear with two men and a handbarrow, and carry off as many as they want for their companies; any Indians that may be about are then allowed to help themselves; and the remnant is then taken by the Colonel's boat's crew, and buried to make compost for that officer's garden. The different officers, as well as the mess of officers, I need not say have previously been supplied.

Apropos des sauvages: I have made the Indian character a subject of some study since I have been at this post. I have not only been present at all the official "*talks*" held with them; but I have frequently had the leading men at my tent, and have conversed a good deal with them through the Interpreter. If I am to regard what I have read of other tribes, or what I have learned from persons who have been among them, I am disposed to consider these Indians—the *Seminoles*—as amongst the most intelligent of the red men on our borders. For some weeks after our arrival they were evidently suspicious as to the object of the Government in sending troops into their country, and they did not come near us; nor was it until an officer, accompanied by an interpreter, was sent to the nearest town with the assurance that we came as friends, and bearing an invitation from the commanding officer to the chief to visit us, that we saw anything of them. In a day or two, however, the chief came, accompanied by half a dozen of his braves. The ceremony was very formal; they were well dressed, and really men of dignity and good breeding as far as externals may be trusted. Of much that has been written of the red man, there is little that is of a stamp to be relied upon.

Some writers have drawn the Indian character *couleur de rose*—all courage, generosity, and magnanimity; others have represented them as devoid of all the noble or estimable qualities which elevate man above the brute creation. Both pictures may be, and no doubt are, correct portraits of individuals of any of the various tribes which inhabit the vast wilds contiguous to cultivated North America. But neither, I think from what I have seen, should be received as a true delineation of the red man. The Seminoles, for I speak of them only, are in some respects not below the standard of the white man: they have equal, perhaps superior, quickness of perception, but want strength and depth of reason, and consequently are without sound judgment. They are adroit in planning, and in the prosecution of their plans have equal perseverance. The difference in the development of the intellectual faculties as well as the moral, had they been by nature equal in the two races, which I am satisfied is *not* the case; the difference, I say, in education, or, in other words, the habitual exercise of the mental and moral faculties in the different pursuits of savage and civilized life, would, in the course of ages, have produced the difference between the white man and the red which now exists.

But the Indian has not lost his social sensibility nor his paternal and filial affection, as I have witnessed on several occasions; and I will at some other time give you instances clearly and strongly illustrating what I say. The Indian has an instinctive love of fame which prompts him to individual deeds of signal gallantry. Revenge is a cherished virtue, and ever leads to acts of diabolical cruelty. His courage is always restrained by prudence, and he will never undertake a hazardous measure unless the chances are greatly in his favor. Although these Indians were suspicious and consequently cautious at first, as I have stated, a favorable impression was very soon produced by the judicious management of the commanding officer, assisted by all under him; and I believe there is not now an Indian of note in the whole Seminole nation that I do not know personally, from Micanopy "the king" down. The town nearest to us, (at a distance of twelve miles,) and the first with which we opened communication, is "Thlonoto-sasa," which translated is "*Flint-abundant.*" It numbers about two hundred souls, and is under the rule of "Tustenuggee-thlock-ko," the "*Stout Chief.*" An incident occurred a month ago which afforded one of many instances of filial affection to which I have alluded. In few words you have it here.

It happened one day, that, among the motley crowd of visitors that graced our camp,—for there are grades or classes, the result of wealth or talent, with Indians as well as other peoples,—there were present a man of the better class, of thirty years, and his wife, of twenty, with a pretty child of two years. This Indian and his wife were by all of us much admired for their personal beauty, and esteemed for their quiet, yet dignified but always respectful bearing whenever addressed. They seemed to be a model of conjugal happiness: never seen apart, never jarred by any clashing of separate inclinations or motives. The husband was, I think, the most perfectly formed man I ever beheld, and graceful in every motion; the wife, in addition to uncommon personal attractions, was ever scrupulously neat: both had withal a calm and peaceful expression of countenance that bespoke the friendly regard of all who met them. On the unfortunate day to which I allude, that bane of the red man, that cursed and destroying affliction which the advance of the pale of civilization has imposed upon his race, a bottle of *whisky*, fell by some means into the possession of our friend. Like a true Indian, he drank it off in a few minutes, notwithstanding the efforts of his wife to prevent it. The effect, as you may suppose, was sudden and fearful. His brain was crazed; in a state of wild frenzy he threw off his clothes, except that portion of which an Indian never divests himself, and mounting his horse, rode furiously about the camp, stopping every few yards to challenge the soldiers, and whooping his war-cry in the faces of all he met. His poor wife, with her child in arms, was following him, and striving to reclaim him. The outrage became so serious as to reach the ears of the commanding officer, who immediately sent for the chief, then also in the camp. To him the Colonel read a scathing lecture, and directed him to have this Indian removed, or he would be arrested by the guard and severely dealt with. Old Tustenuggee, who had seen some fifty summers, bowed his head without reply. He walked rapidly to the part of the camp where he understood his townsman was. On coming upon him, the chief uttered in a low tone a few words which I, who had been brought to the spot by the tumult, did not understand; but the effect upon the inebriate was magical. He was sobered at once. He hung his head, and suffered his wife to lead his horse to where her own was fastened, when together they left our camp. The chief and his party bivouacked that night at the spring, about a mile from our camp.

In the course of the evening, the Indian who had been intoxicated became sober; and smarting under the reproof he had received from his chief, arose from his own fire, which his wife had kindled, and walked over to that of his chief. The latter had not his family with him, and was alone, seated by his fire, with his pipe as his only companion and solace. The other seated himself quietly on the opposite side of the fire, and after a short pause, which is always the introduction to the discussion of a serious matter, complained of the indignity that had been offered to him. Whatever it was, I never learned; but it was evidently what the chief had said to him at our camp, and which, as it humbled him, had also galled him bitterly.

But few words, as we were told, passed between them, when the young man sprang across the fire, seized his chief under the arms, and thrust his back and shoulders into the fire, where he held him until the latter fainted, when he cast him on the ground and moved away slowly to his own hearth-stone, where he directed his wife to saddle their horses. They then, without further ado, rode off, and have not been seen since, though I have understood they are sojourning in the neighborhood of Okahumpky, about one hundred miles north of us. This narration I have spun out more in detail than I intended, for it was at first meant only as an introduction to the incident, illustrating, as I have above stated, the genuine, the unaffected filial affection of the Indian character. I now proceed:—

The following morning the affair was reported to the Colonel, who at once requested the surgeon to ride out and see what could be done for the old man. On his return, the surgeon reporting that the old Chief was very seriously if not fatally burned, a light wagon with a bedsack was sent for him; a wall-tent was pitched near the Hospital tent, and old Tustenuggee was comfortably established. The next day, his wife, a son about twenty, a daughter of eighteen, and a younger boy, came to camp. They had a tent given them by the side of the Chief's, and there abode. The meeting, I was told, was quiet, but exceedingly touching; and I certainly never saw, during several weeks that the Chief lay, at first in great danger, afterwards convalescing, more gentleness and more skilfulness and tender care than these children of the forest showed in moving and handling their father, while the doctor dressed his wounds. No one of them ever left him for an hour. Scarcely did they suffer a wish to be expressed before it was gratified. Indeed, I often thought the group of husband, wife, father, mother, and children, was a subject worthy the pen of a Walter Scott, who alone could have given in their true colors a graphic presentation of the patient smile of the Chief, the anxious but ever watchful eye and ever ready hand of his wife, and the unsleeping assiduity of the children. I confess I never saw these traits more beautifully exemplified where Christianism, the religion taught by the Saviour of men, was accepted and its teachings practised.

I have only further to say that the old man finally recovered, thanks to the care of the doctor and the untiring watchfulness of his family; and was afterwards always known and referred to as the "*Burnt Chief.*"

I have written a long letter. It is late, and I will, therefore, bid you good night.

SEMINOLE AGENCY, July 15.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—You will perhaps feel some surprise on opening this letter to find me writing from the Indian Agency. I arrived here a few days ago at the head of my company, to the command of which I have just attained. To explain this, I must tell you, that, during the passed winter, the Government purchased from the Tallahassee and Micasuky tribes of Indians their fine lands in the northern parts of East Florida; and in addition to valuable presents agreed to give them, in exchange, lands further south in the Peninsula, to which they were at once to remove. This would bring them upon the borders of the Seminole country. And it "was proposed by the Government to unite the three tribes under one chief, to be elected by the common voice when they came together; the union thus formed to be styled the "Seminole Nation."

No objections were made to this proposition by the more northern tribes; yet it was not favorably received by the Seminoles proper. These tribes are branches which sprang, at times more or less distant, from the Creeks, whose language, with little variation, they all speak. Indeed, the word *Seminole*, in the Creek tongue, as I learn, signifies "*outlaw;*" the individuals who in ages past formed the *nucleus* of the tribe being the reckless, dissolute, and abandoned fugitives from punishment, principally from the lower Creeks; or they were the more restless or more adventurous, or the more independent, who would not brook the control or presence of a superior.

A hundred years, probably, have passed, since with increased numbers they assumed the dignity and title of the "*Seminole tribe,*" by a union of the different bands scattered over the peninsula, and the election of a common chief. It is said that an influential Indian named Payne was the person who succeeded in bringing the bands together, and uniting them as one people. This chief, who was called *King Payne*, was the grandfather of the present chief, Micanopy, and lived to a very great age. He was succeeded by his son, and the latter by Micanopy, the grandson, who inherited on the death of his father the title of King, and became the ruler of his people. He is also styled the "Governor," and "Pond Governor." I know him personally quite well: he is of medium height, stout, with a large, stolid face, heavy eyes, and a general bearing and expression denoting lethargy. Though slow of speech, I have always found him communicative and good-tempered. He is rather too indolent to rule harshly; and in fact he leaves official matters very much to the management of his Minister of State, as I may call him, a man who possesses great cunning and effrontery. This person, "bold in council, but cautious in the field," never distinguished himself by deeds of enterprise or courage, and has received the name of *Hote-mathla*, in English, "*Home-warrior;*" he is known, however, more generally, if not exclusively, by the name of "*Jumper.*"

I have remarked to you that the Seminoles, but particularly their chief, Micanopy, did not at all relish the idea of being incorporated with the Tallahassee and Micasuky tribes. Together, the latter were more numerous than the former; and as they would almost to a man vote for one of their own chiefs, Micanopy's chance for the office of principal chief was by no means flattering. The northern tribes had already reached the Agency, located about ten miles south of Orange Lake; and as the time appointed for the election drew nigh, the excitement among the Seminoles grew so high, that the Agent, Colonel Gad Humphreys, formerly an officer of rank in the United States Army, apprehended serious trouble. He in consequence wrote to the commanding officer here, requesting that as strong a military force as could be spared might be sent to the Agency without delay, in order to prevent bloodshed.

Colonel Brooke, fully appreciating the responsibility, and the danger, indeed, that enwrapped the Agent personally, as well as the disappointment which the failure of its purpose would occasion the Government, besides the necessity that might arise for a resort to sterner measures in the sequel, ordered two companies to be in readiness, with sixty rounds of ball cartridges and ten days' rations, to march at reveille on the morning after the receipt of the Agent's letter. The detail fell upon the senior captain, F. L. Dade, commanding Company C, and the junior lieutenant, temporarily commanding Company D of our battalion, the latter being no less a person than your humble servant. Those who were the subjects of the order were up till a late hour arranging every thing for the early movement. At the hour appointed, our little command moved out with a baggage train of four pack-mules, carrying the subsistence and an extra supply of ammunition. I will not dwell upon the incidents of our march. The distance to the Agency, following the old Indian trail, is something over one hundred miles, which our command accomplished in five days. One day was a counterpart of the preceding one: a march through woods of the long-leaf pine, occasionally intersected with savannas of tall grass, either wet or dry, according to the season, and now decidedly wet; or obstructed by rivers. Three of the latter, besides small streams, we forded; the water being from two and a half to three and a half feet deep. These rivers were the Hillsborough and the Big and the Little Onithlokonchee. At night we slept on our arms, having no tents. The only occurrence worthy of note is, that on arriving at Micanopy's town, which was quite near our route,—some fifteen miles below the Agency,—we found it abandoned. A negro, who came out to meet us, informed the commanding officer that the inhabitants, on hearing of our approach, had taken to the swamp, and would fight if followed. He was told that our object was to prevent fighting, and that they had no cause to regard us other than as friends. On our arrival here, we found the principal chiefs of the northern Indians at the Agent's quarters, who, with the assistance of the Seminoles, had built a comfortable log-house with capacious piazzas.

The following day our command was turned out with axes and "*frows*," an instrument for riving *clap-boards*, or rough shingles, and by sunset we were all comfortably established in open sheds. The men, as well as the officers, were at night under good sheds, and raised from the ground by very primitive cots, formed by driving four forked stakes and laying thereon saplings, upon which were spread a layer of clap-boards, which, with a couple of blankets, made, in the open air, very comfortable couches. The day appointed for the election was still some ten days off. During this time I had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with the chief of the Micasukies, the candidate chosen by the Micasukies and Tallahassees to run against Micanopy, the Seminole candidate for the supreme chieftainship of the consolidated tribes. "*Tuko-see-mathla*,"—meaning the "*Ant-chief*," in allusion, I suppose, to his industry in promoting the welfare of his people,—is a man of fifty years. He is known to the whites by the adopted name of John Hicks.

Tuko-see-mathla is one of nature's noblemen. He is nearly six feet two inches in height; finely formed; his figure combining strength with gracefulness; or, I might say, perfect ease in all his attitudes and gestures. The expression of his fine open countenance is habitually mild; but as he grows earnest in conversation, you see arise within him that glow of fervid feeling warming into the determined energy which characterizes the man.

Yesterday being Sunday, there was neither fatigue duty for the men, nor duty under arms; and the Agent, Colonel Gad Humphreys, proposed to Captain Yancey and myself to make a visit to the *Silver Spring*, one of the great natural curiosities of Florida. This spring is about three miles from the Agency. Soon after breakfast we mounted our horses, and following an Indian trail or path, rode over a rolling and at times quite a hilly country, rather sparsely wooded with pine and post-oak. As we approached the spring, we descended into flat savannahs, where no tree occurs by which the eye may measure distances, and where the waving of the tall grass appears in the distance like a vast bay of green water enclosed within a frame-work of pine forests. As you draw nigh to the water's edge, you come into richer land, from which start up huge trees; the hickory, the loblolly-bay, and gum being prominent, while the towering magnolia grandiflora overlooks the beautiful scene. Our pathway to the spring led us to a little, retired, sandy nook, where we found a canoe, hauled up on shore and fastened with a hickory withe to a small sapling. Having dismounted and secured our horses, to launch the canoe was the work of a moment. Into this egg-shell, nine feet long and two feet wide at the middle, we entered in the following order: your servant, being slender and light, went first, and seated himself in the bow looking towards the stern; the Agent, who has a goodly presence, and counts two hundred on the scales, followed to the middle of the "*dug-out*," as canoes of smaller size fashioned out of a cypress log are, in plain phrase, styled, and seated himself looking to the front; while Yancey, who is neither stout nor slender, took his place in the extreme after-part and assumed the paddle. You must understand that we were one and all seated on the bottom of the canoe, there being no *thwarts* in vessels of this size and description; nor would it have been discreet to occupy them, had there been such. Yancey moved us out upon this vast expanse of water by the gentlest motion of his oar. O! how my heart swelled with astonishment as we neared the centre of this grand basin of limpid water. Think of a body of water coming from under a limestone bluff of rugged front, in volumes of almost incalculable bulk, and filling a deep rocky cup of oval form, whose surface was one hundred and fifty yards in length by one hundred in width, and so pellucid that looking into it is like looking into the air, and you may form some faint idea of the scene in which we became, as it were, actors as well as spectators. Not a cloud was in the heavens above, not a breath of air to stir the surface of the water. We had now reached the centre of this grand spring-basin. Yancey carefully withdrew his paddle from the water and laid it by his side; the motion of the boat gradually ceased. We were stationary. "Now!" said Humphreys, "be quiet and hold your breath!" In a moment all was still as death. The line of demarcation between the water and the atmosphere was invisible. Heavens! what an impression filled my mind at that moment! Were not the canoe and its contents obviously suspended in mid-air, like Mahomet's coffin? In truth it seemed so to all of us, yet no one spoke. The trees all round the margin were doubled, and we seemed to be enclosed within a great magic frame. After passing some minutes, which were as ages, in contemplation of this almost fairy scenery, our regards were directed to the real though not less impressive objects in the deep water beneath us. I regret that I did not bring with me a line to ascertain the depth of the water on which we floated; but it was known that the spring had been carefully sounded by competent persons hitherto, and had been found to be in the centre full forty feet deep. Here at this depth of water, the sights revealed to our admiring gaze were scarcely less wonderful than those witnessed above us and around. The smallest spur or branch of delicate moss growing on the sandy or rocky bottom was distinctly visible. The little fish which nibbled at this moss were to the eye as accurately delineated as if they had been at the surface. As we lay here, musing on all these unwonted sights, Colonel Humphreys quietly took his pen-knife from his pocket, and cut from the wristband of his shirt the small mother-of-pearl button which fastened it. He placed it, without speaking, upon the water, and we all with intense interest watched its gradual undulatory descent to the brown sand at the bottom; there we saw plainly the bright-polished button; and we also distinguished clearly the four holes in the button, by means of which it is with thread and needle sewed upon the shirt. This, at the distance of forty feet under water, will no doubt appear to you incredible, but it is nevertheless a *downright fact;* and is, as you are doubtless aware, attributable to the high refractive power of the lime-stone water, as well as its limpidness. When I tell you this, you will readily comprehend how the dividing line between the air and the water is imperceptible when both are at rest. This is not one of the subterraneous rivers found in Florida, but is a true spring, formed by the percolation of surface water, which the heavy rains at certain seasons of the year pour upon the earth.

It is consequently subject to variation in the volume of water it discharges; yet not to any great extent. The channel by which it finds its way to the Ocklawaha River, and thence to the Saint John's, which empties its accumulated floods into the Atlantic, is from five-and-twenty to one hundred feet wide and twenty deep, and flows chiefly through a savannah country. After passing several hours at this magic theatre of nature, where the songs of various birds, sporting in the yellow jessamine and other flower-bearing vines which festoon the trees, add music to its other charms, we retraced our steps, pondering in our inward thoughts the marvellous works of the divine Maker of heaven and earth.

SEMINOLE AGENCY, August 20, 1826.

MY DEAR FATHER:—The election of Supreme Chief of the three tribes, united under the name of the Seminole Nation, took place at the appointed time; and when the returns came in from the different bands, it was found to have resulted, as every one anticipated, in the choice of Tuko-see-mathla, by a decided majority. No disturbance had occurred anywhere; Micanopy, governed by the advice of the Agent and the presence of the troops, having wisely yielded to circumstances he could not control. The inauguration of the chief was appointed to take place on the twentieth day after the announcement by the Agent of the result of the election; and "*runners*" were started in every direction with "*the sticks.*" That is to say; each messenger was furnished with one or more bundles of little sticks about five inches long and the eighth of an inch in diameter, each bundle containing twenty in number; day by day as the runner travelled he threw out one, and on reaching the band to which he was sent, he delivered the remainder to the head-man, who was required to be present with his people at the Agency, on the day the last of the remaining sticks was thrown away by himself. All went on quietly throughout the nation.

In the mean time, as the grand day approached, a party of Micasukies, who were encamped with their chief about a mile from the Agency, commenced the erection of an amphitheatre, in which the ceremony was to take place. I was surprised to see how much mechanical skill they displayed, and before the appointed time arrived they had completed a structure of no mean character. A circular arbor, fifty feet wide and two hundred feet in diameter on the outer circle, was well covered in with green boughs; under this were erected seats formed of *post-oak*, rising one above another, in true amphitheatrical style, and capable of seating near two thousand warriors; for the Indian women do not appear in public on official occasions of this kind. The open area was, as you will comprehend, one hundred feet in diameter. At the point opposite the public entrance was a small open space, such as you see at the circus for the entrance of the actors. The twentieth day at length came, and the officers of our little command, in company with the Agent, mounted their horses and rode to the place appointed in an open plain half a mile distant from the Agency, where the inauguration was to take place at seven o'clock P. M. When we arrived, the grounds were crowded; three thousand souls were said to be present, though the men only were in the amphitheatre. We were met at the entrance by a Micasuky chief, who conducted the party to seats reserved for the Agent and his friends. Every seat was already filled, and the most perfect order and silence prevailed. In the centre of the open space blazed brightly the council-fire of *light-wood knots*, (*i. e.* the dried resinous knots of the long-leafed pine,) which threw its light fully over the whole assemblage. Soon after we were seated, the ceremonies commenced with the rattlesnake-dance, in honor of the chief elect, that animal being held sacred by the religious sect to which he belonged; for you must know that every Indian holds some indigenous animal as tutelary, and will not under any circumstances destroy it. One hundred picked warriors, led by a Micasuky chief, all arrayed in their war-paint and their best apparel, entered the area in single file, each one holding the hand of the one in front of him; thus making an unbroken chain of men representing the animal held sacred by him who was to rule them.

They came slowly, beating time with their feet to the song of their leader, and joining in the chorus at certain intervals. The last man held a large gourd with pebbles inside, which was intended to represent the rattles of the reptile, and which he shook aloft with furious gesticulations. They danced slowly round the fire until they had enveloped it with three of their coils. They then halted, but continued the song in slow measure, still marking the time with their feet, and reciting the deeds and the merit of their chief; as the Interpreter who accompanied the Agent informed us. This being finished, the leading chief uncoiled his followers, singing to a sprightly air, so moved out of the ring. There was something decidedly novel in this performance, but it was enacted with great dignity and grace, and was certainly highly interesting and impressive; it occupied some twenty minutes. Several other dances followed, in celebration of war, of the offering of the first-fruits and so forth, until an hour had passed. Then came forth a herald waving a small flag on which the stars and stripes were displayed: he advanced towards where we sat; then turning towards the fire, called out in a loud voice, "Tuko-see-mathla!" three times, pausing some moments between his calls.

A deep silence prevailed throughout the assemblage for what appeared to me a long time, when the chief stepped forth from the side opposite us with a deliberate pace and most impressive demeanor. His head and his feet were bare, and his only garment, save the flap always girt about the loins of a Seminole, whose tapering ends, ornamented with beads and various-colored embroidery, fall both front and rear to the knee, was a simple shirt of a dingy brown, whose folds did not reach the knee. He silently approached the Herald, and when he had reached him, slightly bent forward his head. The other, without speaking, drew from his belt a minute war-club, not seven inches long, to the head of which was attached a small lock of hair. This emblem he carefully fastened in the scalp-lock of the elect of the people, and in a few loud, emphatic words, proclaimed him Supreme Chief of the Seminole Nation. Having done this, he retired amidst the prolonged shouts of assent from two thousand warriors.

Tuko-see-mathla stood calmly, his eyes unraised, until the last note of applause had subsided. He then erected his fine figure to its full height, and looked steadily around upon his audience. Having apparently assured himself of the temper and feeling of his people of the several tribes now brought together for the first time, he commenced his address in a low tone, and with a slight tremor in his voice. But as he proceeded and warmed with his subject, his voice swelled to its full, manly volume, and his words flowed in an unbroken stream, which manifested the fixedness of his purpose and the settled conviction of his mind as to what was the policy he should adopt and fearlessly carry out, in order to establish harmony and promote the welfare of the nation.

The interpreter stood by the Agent's side, and gave us a free translation of the address as it proceeded. And this he had little difficulty in doing; for the Seminole language or tongue being far from copious, it often required a dozen words to express an idea that might readily be conveyed in three of the English language. The purport of what the speaker said required some fifteen minutes or more to convey to his hearers, and can be given you in a few words. He said, they had elected him without any solicitation on his part; that, as he accepted office, he would enforce the laws without favor to any portion of the people now embodied into one; that, if they violated the laws of either of the respective tribes which in the whole were, in the abstract, the same, he would punish with an unflinching rigor the individual so offending; and, in conclusion, enjoined on all a kindly feeling to those who were newly associated with them. When he finished, it was ten o'clock. The meeting then was dissolved by himself in a kind of prayer or injunction to all to respect the law and live in peace. At the conclusion, I felt as if I had been listening to an enlightened and, indeed, to a great man. All that he said evinced so much good sense, and was conveyed in so eloquent and forcible a manner, that I could not but accord him that place in my estimation.

We all rode back to camp at ten at night, much gratified by the evening's visit to the Indian camp, and the dignified conduct of the people, and in especial their noble chief. In the morning, Tuko-see-mathla came to the Agent's quarters dressed in the most sumptuous habiliments you can imagine. His frock, or coat, was of the finest quality, and adorned with a quantity of silver ornaments around his neck, arms, and wrists, with a gorgeous head-dress of colored shawls. His bearing was that of a chief indeed. He was attended by his lictors with their maces; and while I was present, sent a party to inflict punishment upon some offenders who had a short time before committed a gross violation of the laws of the nation, or rather of those in force in the tribe to which they had before belonged.

This is a long letter, so, my dear father, good night.

SEMINOLE AGENCY, August 31, 1826.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—I know not when my letters written here will reach you. I write to fill up hours that would be otherwise vacant and unspeakably tedious, and I give you narratives of events of the passing days when there is any incident that I think may interest you, or may amuse an idle hour as it does myself in writing it. The northern Indians, the new-comers, have not yet selected the lands on which they will settle themselves. The planting season being past, they will have no corn of their own raising this year; they know not yet the hunting-grounds where their fall and winter supplies of flesh are to be obtained; nor are they acquainted with the regions where the *coonta*, or arrow-root, the chief substitute for corn or farinaceous food, is to be sought. Consequently the whole of the Micasuky and Tallahassee tribes have to be furnished with rations of beef and flour by the Government. This requires many bullocks to be slain weekly; consequently, droves are brought, at the expense of the Government, from Georgia, and turned loose on the savannahs around Alachua, some ten miles off.

From these wild ranges the cattle are driven here by the Indians themselves in numbers as required, and confined within a great pen, with a rough fence some seven or eight feet high. Thrice a week, a party of the red men, sent by the chief, come to the Agency to receive the rations of beef and corn furnished them by order of the Government, as I have stated. It would be troublesome, if not very difficult, to drive a few head of these half wild cattle to the Indian camp, and it has been thought advisable to slaughter them here; consequently, the Indians bring their rifles with them. Now the Agent, I must tell you, is a crack shot with the rifle, and delights in the practice. He is, therefore, frequently present on these occasions;

and exhibits his skill to his red children, by sending his bullet to the exact spot above the curl in the forehead of the victim selected for the shambles. A few days since, I went out with others to see the Indians shoot. A fine steer was the first selected; the Indians, however, fired three or four shots into him before he was laid low. When the next one doomed to bite the dust was designated, the Agent handed his rifle to one of our officers, Captain Jeremiah Yancey, saying,—

"Show these fellows that we can beat them with the rifle."

This officer mounted over the fence into the pen, where the cattle roamed rather at large, and fired his shot. The bullet took effect in his front, but was not accurately aimed, striking the animal under the eye, and greatly enraging him without bringing him to the ground.

A little incident then occurred, which exhibited, in the sequel, the quickness of perception of the Indian and his profound knowledge of the physical working of the organs through which the passions of his fellow-man are manifested. After the last shot I have mentioned had been fired, Colonel Humphreys reloaded his rifle, and presented it to me, inviting me to try my luck. I could not decline the proffer, and having had, since I joined the army, some practice with the rifle, I trusted to the steadiness of my hand for success in the attempt to slay the wounded beast. I had to advance to nearly the central part of the enclosure before I could catch the eye of my intended victim to draw his attention towards myself, in order that I might have a full view of his forehead. I had no sooner attracted his attention, however, than he lowered his head and charged right at me. I then felt that my only safety lay in my coolness and deliberation. I accordingly raised my rifle slowly, and as the curl in the forehead came upon the front sight of my gun I pulled trigger. The furious animal fell, with all his four feet drawn close under his body, at the report of the gun. He was dead. As I looked at the lifeless mass before me, a shout from the party at the fence caused me to raise my eyes. To my horror I saw another steer break from the retiring mass that had retreated at the crack of my rifle, and with head down charging right upon me. I had a good distance (to me it seemed a long one) to run to reach the fence. I did, however, reach it; and as I put my foot upon a lower rail, a strapping, big Indian, who had sprung to the top of the fence, caught me by the arm, and lifted me into his arms as if I had been an infant, just as the infuriated beast struck his horns against the fence. As the Indian drew me to himself, he clapped his hand upon my heart, and for a moment held it there; he then turned to the Agent, and said in his own language,—

"His heart is quiet: he was not afraid."

I was not conscious at the moment that I had done anything worthy of commendation; though, when one of our party asked me why I did not throw away my gun, I discovered, as I scornfully retorted, that, in fact, the spectators were more alarmed for my safety than I had been myself. I have daily further opportunity for studying the Indian character. I see many traits in these Indians that do not belong to what we had been taught to regard as those of the savage—unrighteous and unmerciful.

September 15.—Since the preceding lines were written, we have been lying here idle; the Agent, who had full authority in the matter, not deeming it prudent to authorize the departure of the troops before he felt assured that all feeling on the part of Micanopy and his followers had subsided, and that Hicks' people were settling down on the better portions of land around him, and preparing to build their huts or houses. Nothing worthy of note has occurred that could tempt even idleness to resort to inditing letters in self-defence; but, thank fortune, confidence is now established, and we march to-morrow for Hillsborough. For the present, adieu.

HILLSBOROUGH BAY, September 25.

We reached the headquarters of the regiment a few days since, coming by easy marches and by a different route from that by which we proceeded to the Agency. There being no vessel in port, I will add a *P. S.* to this letter, to give you one or two incidents that occurred on the march down. On the third day we reached "*Pelahlikaha,*"—in English, "Many Ponds." In the midst of these ponds, on a ridge of high "*shell-hummock*" land—*once*, when old ocean's waves rolled over it—a vast bed of small shell-fish or mollusks which for centuries had probably been accumulating, there now flourishes one of the most prosperous negro towns in the Indian territory. We found these negroes in possession of large fields of the finest land, producing large crops of corn, beans, melons, pumpkins, and other esculent vegetables. They are chiefly runaway slaves from Georgia, who have put themselves under the protection of Micanopy, or some other chief, whom they call master; and to whom, for this consideration, they render a tribute of one-third of the produce of the land, and one-third of the horses, cattle, and fowls they may raise. Otherwise they are free to go and come at pleasure, and in some cases are elevated to the position of equality with their masters. I saw, while riding along the borders of the ponds, fine rice growing; and in the village large corn-cribs well filled, while the houses were larger and more comfortable than those of the Indians themselves. The three principal men bear the distinguished names of July, August, and Abram. We found these men to be shrewd, intelligent fellows, and to the highest degree obsequious. Here we made our *bivouac.*

The next morning our guide conducted the command by an old trail in a southwest direction to a small Seminole settlement on the Wee-thlocko-chee River—(this word is a compound of three words, viz., Little-broad-river.) Here again we made our bivouac. On the following morning, we prepared for the crossing. The river is about one hundred and fifty yards wide at this place, and is deep and rapid. The sub-chief residing here, and two of his men, were engaged with a good canoe to carry over the men and their baggage, and to swim the horses and mules.

The muleteers, together with a guard, were first sent over to receive and secure the mules as they arrived. The sub-chief now took the paddle to propel and steer the boat, while his two assistants took each a mule by the halter, and seated near the bow of the boat, held one on either side: the chief put his boat in motion, and the next moment the animals were swimming rapidly alongside. This operation had been successfully repeated four or five times, when a fine large mule, conspicuous in the gang, and familiarly known to all the men as "Old Rock," was suddenly taken with a fit of obstinacy, or a fit of cramp, or a fit of perversity of temper to which mules are sometimes addicted—I never knew which; but whatever may have been the motive or the dire controlling evil, "Old Rock" certainly stopped short in mid-river, and held back with a determined might that effectually checked the headway of the canoe, in spite of all the exertions of the chief to force it on. A beautiful white mule called Fanny, on the other side of the canoe, becoming impatient of restraint, reared and plunged in the water so fearfully as to endanger all on board, until the chief told the man who held her to let her go. He did so, and the mule swam to the landing and quietly walked up to her driver. In the mean time there was a severe contest between Old Rock and the Indian who held him by the halter. The canoe was absolutely stationary; the best endeavors of the chief being barely sufficient by keeping the bow of his boat upstream, in order to prevent its drifting below the landing.

The Indian who had hold of the mule's head was fast becoming exhausted by the efforts of the animal to draw his head under water. At this critical point of time, a large Indian, finely dressed, who was standing near me on the bank, plunged into the river, "accoutred as he was," and swam like an otter to the scene of action. Here he caught the mule by the tail with both hands, keeping his own position by "*treading water*," as swimmers say; and with the strength of a strong man he twisted and wrung the tail of the most obstinate or the most to be compassionated of mules, till one would have thought the infliction would have moved the devil himself, had his tail been so handled. But it was "*no go*." Old Rock never flinched. By this time the Indian at the head was fast giving way; the head of the brute had been gradually subsiding beneath the water; and now his nose was entirely submerged, although the man still held on. One more twist of the tail, and the man at the head called out as he released his grasp, "*Eleegis-chez!*" "*He is dead.*" The next moment, the stark, stiff carcass of poor Old Rock was seen floating down the river, borne away for ever upon that rapid current.

It was, in sober truth, a most strange affair; no one could account for it. The Indians themselves, who are quick and sagacious in the management of animals, did not attempt a solution of the mysterious occurrence; but when the commanding officer, through the negro interpreter, asked the chief what was the cause of the mule holding back, he shook his head, and replied with a doubting air, "*Stentose; holywagus chez:*" "*I know not; it is a bad thing;*" evidently attaching to the occurrence, in his own mind, the idea of supernatural agency. I do not think there was in the command a man who did not feel sobered and full of regret at the loss of Old Rock, besides being sorely puzzled to account for it.

We got everything across without further accident, and marched to the Indian town of "*Choco-chatee*," "Red House," (*choko*, house; *chatee*, red,) whose chief, "*Hal-berta-chee*," "*Little Alligator*," received us cordially. He is small and slight in stature, but has an intelligent face, and an expression of great mildness, though said to be of a determined character. Nothing more of interest occurred until we reached headquarters. Adieu.

HILLSBOROUGH BAY, ——.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—We are in the month of October, and notwithstanding all the alarms that have tortured the minds of the over-anxious and the prognostications of the over-wise, the command, both here and detached, has enjoyed uninterrupted health; and no troops have ever fared better as regards the Subsistence Department. Besides the fine fish and oysters which I have already dilated upon, the "company gardens" have supplied the companies with abundance of green vegetables. The Indians also bring us a good deal of game at very moderate prices; for example, twenty-five cents for a wild turkey or a ham of venison. The brown or whooping crane is also brought in by the Indian hunters, and is an excellent bird. With a larger and fuller body than the wild goose, I think it is superior in flavor, and I place it next to the turkey on the bill of fare.

While on this subject, I must also name the *gopher*. This is a tortoise of about fifteen inches in length by twelve in breadth, and considered in all the extreme Southern States, where it is found, a decided delicacy for the table.

For a soup or a stew, I have found it scarcely inferior to the green turtle, of which more *anon.* The gopher, which is abundant in the pine woods of Florida, prefers the sandy soil, into which it burrows; and being a nocturnal animal in a great measure, passes the day chiefly in its underground domicil. It possesses wonderful strength, as I have seen a large man, say of one hundred and fifty pounds weight, step upon the back of one on the floor, and the creature move off without apparent exertion. They are readily sold by the Indians at twenty-five cents a brace. By the by, an amusing incident concerning gophers transpired not long since. A certain officer of the Regiment, who is something of an epicure, had a "*gopher crawl,*" that is, a small space in his back yard picketed in (for I must tell you that officers as well as the enlisted soldiers are now in comfortable log quarters) for fattening these animals.

But to proceed with the story:—a long-legged, lathy negro boy of some fourteen years, belonging to one of the Thlonoto-sass Indians, called at this officer's quarters and offered for sale a brace of gophers. He received his quarter of a dollar; and Andrew, the cook, a negro slave, was ordered to put them in the crawl, which at the time happened to be empty. He was also charged to feed them regularly with dried beans and other articles of vegetable diet. The next day the boy, John, brought another pair of gophers to the same officer, and received his quarter. The next day it was the same, and the next, and the next. The officer was delighted with his good fortune, and at the end of some ten days, not having kept the count strictly, he told Andrew to count the gophers, and let him know how many were in the crawl. Andrew did go to the crawl, in one corner of which a quantity of brush had been thrown, under which these *nocturnal* animals might retire during the day; and he did shake up the brush and toss it about very thoroughly, but he saw never a gopher but the two he had just put in.

Andrew, naturally enough, was first amazed, then perplexed, and finally confounded at the discovery he had made; for he could be sworn he had daily put a brace into the crawl for many days in succession; and so he protested to his master to whom he hastened with the news.

His master was no less surprised than Andrew; and in addition he was first disappointed, then vexed, and finally enraged at the cheat he began to suspect had been played upon him. He at once sent out his *Orderly* to look for Master John, who was soon brought before him, looking as pale as a negro can look. Under the fear of being well flogged if he did not confess, John let out the truth; which of course was, that he had leaped the paling every night and captured the gophers he had sold during the day before. The joke took. John was let off without flogging, but with the "*nomme de guerre*" of "*Gopher John*" tacked to him for life.

The weather at this season is perfectly delicious—I can't call it anything else. The rainy season is past. The temperature during the day is just such as you would desire for exercise, while after night a little light-wood fire is pleasant as you sit by it and recount the incidents—and in a soldier's life there are always some—of the past day.

The Colonel has in contemplation a grand hunting, fishing, and exploring expedition up the Gulf coast as far as Anclote Keys. He has hinted it to me already, for I have recently had the honor to be appointed his Adjutant, and of course I am much with him. I shall be "*au comble de mes desirs*" if he invites me, for he is going to a region that abounds in game of all kinds.

This letter has not been written at one sitting. Some time has passed since I began it. I have written it at odd moments, having been interrupted half a dozen times and obliged to lay it aside; for an Adjutant, as a soldier says, is *always* on duty, and is liable to be called upon for something requiring immediate attention forty times a day. I must lay aside my pen again.

November 12.

The transport with supplies has not appeared yet, therefore no mail in, none out. I will therefore add a few lines to the foregoing.

I want to tell you of a little personal chance I had to come home with a broken neck, a few days since; but as the neck was not broken, nor any other damage sustained by the writer, I trust you will pardon the egotism that must be employed in narrating the singular adventure I met with. A few days since a party of four of us rode out to give the hounds a "*start*," and perhaps kill a deer. There were Surgeon De Camp, Captain Isaac Clark, and Mr. Marsh, the Sub-Indian Agent of the Seminoles, who has his Agency a short distance from our Camp, Barracks, or Fort, whichever it may please the authorities to call this military station.

About three o'clock P. M. we directed our course up the Hillsborough River, but had not proceeded more than two or three miles through the open pine woods, when, on a sudden, up sprang a large buck and three does. It had happened that a few days before this, Captain Clark and myself had tried the speed of our horses for half a mile, for a dozen of wine. The judges declared it a drawn race. The Captain declined to run it over, though he still talked a good deal of the speed and running qualities of his horse. Therefore when the deer bounced up, I called out to him, "Now, Captain, is the time to try the speed of your horse;" and with that I drove the spurs into my charger (not my charmer, the fleet Kate) and dashed headlong at the deer. The old buck, heavy with horns, was already falling to the rear of his mates. I rode on his right, and was fast closing up on him, with the intention of giving him a double shot as I passed at the distance of twenty yards on his right. In this position we had run four or five hundred yards, my whole attention riveted upon the noble buck, for there were but few large pine-trees in my course, when on a sudden, to my no small dismay, I perceived the bare trunk of an enormous pine, long since felled by the storm and now blackened by fire, lying directly across my unlucky course, and so near that it was impossible to stop my horse, or even to attempt to turn him to the right or left. The upper portion of the tree was immediately in front of me, the trunk raised by a shattered branch to the height of some three feet from the ground; a large limb springing from it about ten feet on my right, shot upwards until directly before me it left an opening between itself and the main stem of four or five feet. If ever, my dear brother, you unexpectedly found yourself in a similar predicament, you will recollect how like the lightning's flash the mind perceives, reflects, and decides. So was it with me at that moment. I saw my danger at a glance, and also that my only chance was to make a bold leap. Yes—I determined, at all hazards, to leap my horse through the opening, between the trunk of the tree and the limb above. I accordingly laid my head low prepared for the leap, and gave him the spur and the rein. At the instant when he should have taken the leap and which I expected, the rascal whirled to the right as quick as thought, or if anything, a *little* quicker; be that, however, as it may, he in reality sprung completely from under me, so that if my left spur had not caught upon and into his neck a little below the mane, and both my hands, I know not how, grasped his mane, (*without letting go my gun, mind ye*) I should undoubtedly have been laid upon my back on the ground. As it was, my dear friend, I held on, and I retained my hold upon the mane, while the horse, as he ran, at every leap struck my right foot with his forefeet as I hung under his neck. I do not mean that he struck my foot with his shoes, but with the upper part of his hoof, as he raised his feet in running. In this way he ran with me one hundred or more yards; and what do you think passed through my mind during that short interval? I will tell you truly: I said to myself, "*I must get back into the saddle!* for if I do not, his hind heels will assuredly spoil the beauty of my face the instant I touch the ground."

I am, as you know, of light weight, but of unusual strength of arm. Gathering my whole soul into the effort, I swung myself up upon the horse's neck in front of the saddle; I still held the reins and my gun, and by placing both hands on his neck in front of me, I had in an instant thrust myself back into the saddle; one pull then upon the reins sufficed to bring up my horse "*all standing*," as the jockeys say. At this time Captain Clark came alongside; he was as pale as death. "I thought you were gone," was all he faintly said. We turned our horses, without another word, and spurred after the dogs, who were some distance ahead, in full cry. The deer had turned out from the lowlands bordering the river, and were running freely on the pine ridge at the distance of a mile, their course being up the river. They were running on the arc of a circle. We decided to take the "chord" of the arc, though the riding was not so fair. The deer ran about four miles before they turned into the river again. As we pushed on, (we had seen nothing of the other gentlemen,) the dogs were heard coming right down upon us. We stopped. Very soon the buck alone was seen coming down to the river in advance of the dogs. He had evidently been distanced by the does, which had escaped in some other direction, while he had been closely followed by the dogs. I spurred on to meet him, as Clark did not care to take the shot, and as he passed me at long shot, I gave him both barrels. He was palpably hit; but in a hundred yards he reached the dense live-oak hummuck which margined the river, where no horse could enter, owing to the thick underbrush and impenetrable net-work of vines. The dogs followed close at hand, and I dismounted and followed them on foot. With much exertion, I made my way to the river-bank. Deer and dogs had both gone over; the bank was of steep rocks, the water deep, the sun just disappearing below the horizon, and I was compelled, much to my disappointment, to give up the chase. When I returned to my horse, I found the three gentlemen assembled and waiting for me. It was getting dark, and we turned our horses' heads towards home. The dogs did not come home till about ten o'clock the next morning, when their greatly distended bellies proved that they had caught the deer and fairly eaten him up. Good night.—The transport was reported to be some miles below at close of day. She will take our letters, and you will not hear from me again for six weeks.

HILLSBOROUGH BAY, December 1, 1827.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Here we have the most charming weather imaginable; I should say, unparalleled in any part of our country, if, indeed, it is surpassed in any part of the world. Since the third day of October not a drop of rain has fallen, and not twice in a month has a cloud as big as a blanket appeared in the bright canopy above us. The temperature at this time is just what you would choose, if the choice were given you. It is a paradise for those who love to live in the open air. I have had a dream of this joyous life during a fortnight just past. I can hardly call it reality, so completely have I been entranced amidst the novel scenes and exciting pleasures through which I have passed. I hinted to you in my last that I had been led to expect that I might accompany the Colonel on an exploring expedition up along the coast to the Anclote Keys, some thirty or forty miles north of the entrance to this Bay, and from here sixty or seventy miles. Within a day or two of the date of my letter, he announced to me the agreeable intelligence that he would set out at once, and that he would take his adjutant, and no other officer, with him. All arrangements, I now learned, had been already made; and, in fact, the next morning we set sail in his beautiful, schooner-rigged, coppered and copper-fastened, double-bank, twelve-oared boat, furnished with a full set of sails, and a picked crew of twelve men, under command of big Lambert, the cockswain. A beautiful canoe was attached to the stern as a tender or launch. We were accompanied by the six-oared gig and crew with the seine. We had a delightful run down the Bay under sail, with a fair wind; and reached Millet Key at the entrance of the Bay, a distance of thirty miles, in five hours. We landed in a quiet cove on the interior or land side of the island. Tents were soon pitched upon a clean sward, and everything made comfortable; the Colonel's two capital negro servants, waiter and cook, made arrangements for preparing dinner, to which the Colonel proposed to furnish the fish, while I was to look after the venison. As the Colonel with his lines, &c. stepped into the gig with Lambert and two oarsmen, I shouldered my rifle and made my way towards the centre of the island, which is about seven miles in length and from one to three wide. I had not gone a quarter of a mile from our camp, nor been absent more than twenty minutes, before I killed a deer. I saw several, and I doubt not, without claiming much skill as a hunter, I might have bagged others, had I followed up my good luck.

This pleasure, however, I had the firmness to forego; the wants of our little party of four-and-twenty men having been already provided for, for the day, by the performance of my trusty rifle. I determined therefore to return to camp for a couple of men to bring in the venison. With this view I made my way through the brushwood to the landward beach upon which our camp lay, having previously marked in my mind, by noting carefully the shapes and other peculiarities of neighboring trees, the exact locality in which my deer would be found. As I debouched from the thicket, my eye caught sight of the grotesque figure but splendid plumage of a flamingo, on the beach not over fifty yards from where I stood. It was the first bird of the species that I had ever seen in the flesh, although I had from childhood been familiar with the stuffed specimens of the museums. As the bird had not yet perceived me, I stood for several minutes to observe his manners. He was standing in the water knee-deep, and was with his great clumsy beak cleansing and arranging the penfeathers on the side of his body, just under the right wing. The latter was extended, and partially revealed to me the deep scarlet of the wing coverts, and the glossy black of the quill feathers. The whitish spot under the wing, which was at this moment disclosed, offered a distinct target that was not to be declined; my rifle was raised, and as the crack rung along the shore, the flamingo fell without a struggle, dead, upon the water. This was a large male in perfect plumage, whose brilliant hues my eyes dwelt upon in an ecstasy of delight and admiration, because, I suppose, it was the first that it fell to my lot to capture. Now I can exclaim, "What a *child* is man in his appreciation of novelty!" Before we returned from this expedition, I had killed three others, and their possession scarcely caused me a feeble emotion. True; but one only of the last was to compare with this; the others were young birds, that is, birds of the year, and their plumage was of a pale-grayish rose-color. On reaching camp with my trophy, I called to my assistance one of the men, a handy fellow, who in a little while made a very good "skin" of the flamingo.

Having read in Horace, while at the Latin school before I went to West Point, that a great delicacy at table was, in the estimation of the old Romans, a dish of flamingo tongues, I availed myself of the opportunity that now offered of testing the refined taste of that luxurious and extravagant people. So I carefully extracted the coveted member by making with my hunting-knife a slit in the forepart of the neck just below the root of the bill; the lower mandible of which, wherein the tongue lies, being four inches long, an inch deep, and about the same in width; and drawing back the tongue into this aperture, I dissected it with its root entire from the surrounding parts, *secundum artem*. As I then held it in my hand, it appeared to me more than half the size of a sheep's tongue. This I gave to the cook, with particular directions as to how it should be boiled and served at dinner.

All this having been accomplished, I took with me two men, and set out after my deer. We soon reached the spot; one of the men with a hatchet cut a suitable pole on which to sling the animal, when the four legs, with the head, having been tied together, and we were in five minutes' time on our return with the venison in fine case. In coming down the beach, when at a hundred and fifty yards from camp, I discovered a *shoal* of redfish lazily floating about in the shallow water not fifty feet from shore. They were from twenty to thirty in number, and did not pay the least attention to us as we passed.

When we arrived at our camp, finding that the Colonel had not returned, I got out my fishing-lines, and having fastened to the hooks of two lines, upon their shanks each, a white strip of the skin of salted pork, leaving the barbed point of the hook alone bare, I hurried with one of my men to the place where I had seen the fish. We found them in the same listless mood, to all appearances, in which we had left them. In another minute we had coiled our lines in the left hand, and taking in the right hand the leaded end to which the large hook was attached, we threw our lines at the same instant into the midst of the "shoal." In a moment, two fine fish were hooked and drawn in by main force, the redfish not often attempting to carry off the line, like the salmon and some other fish. Although, when these two were secured, the others darted off into deeper water, they soon came back, and two more were as readily hooked and brought on shore. They were really as tame as barndoor fowls, and in half an hour we had secured one dozen fish of from ten to twenty pounds weight. Again I returned to camp, satisfied that we had obtained an ample supply for the larder; and sent two men in the canoe to bring in the fish. In a short time the Colonel returned, equally successful with the hook and line, besides several flounders and sole that Lambert had speared. The day was well advanced when the Colonel and I sat down to a sumptuous dinner, as did likewise the different messes of our little command. After having eaten heartily of fish and of venison, there came, as a *bonne bouche*, the flamingo's tongue. We found it perfectly tender and of delicate flavor, but so exceedingly oily and rich that but little could be taken of a *morceau* otherwise so surprisingly dainty. Night closed in upon the *finale* of our repast, and for another hour I sat in my camp-chair by a cheering fire, listening to the Colonel's amusing account of some noble fish he had succeeded, with Lambert's assistance, in bringing safely on board. At length, when the subject had been fairly exhausted, the Colonel ordered, as a night-cap, a glass of hot "Mountain-dew punch," after which we retired to our tents for the night.

And here I will bid you also to court pleasant dreams and slumbers light.

Fort Brooke, Hillsborough Bay, December, 1838.

My dear Brother:—The following morning, after an early breakfast, the tents were struck, the baggage packed and stowed away on board; the crews were in their seats with oars in hand, and as soon as the Colonel and his Adjutant were seated in the stern-sheets, big Lambert gave the word, "Let fall;" there was a slight plash upon the water as the oars of the two boats descended, there was one strong pull, and we shot forth into deep water.

I must now inform you that there is an inland passage with good boat-channel from the mouth of Espiritu Santo Bay to the head of the Anclote Keys, which was our point of destination. There are six of these keys, long and narrow, stretching from Millet Key northward, with slight or narrow openings; the space between them and the main being from one to two miles. Through this inland passage lay our course, guided by our pilot "Maximo." The latter is a Spaniard, from the fisheries at Charlotte Harbor, whom the Colonel has had for some time in his employ, charged with the care and management of his "turtle crawl." The morning was lovely,—no other word that I can command expresses the impression made upon my outward senses by that bright tranquil morning. But though the morning *was* beautiful, aye lovely, there was not air enough in motion to spare the exercise of thews and sinews; and although I could hear old Lambert, seated behind the Colonel and myself, whisper almost in the Colonel's ear, whose nautical predilections he well understood, "Blow! San Antonio, blow!" yet the saint, for the present, turned a deaf ear to our old sea-dog; and in consequence, some ten miles had to be accomplished with the oars alone. At length, however, the saint relented; we had a smart breeze, and in a "*jiffey*" all sail was set, and we skimmed over the waves of the last five miles in the most delectable state of mind of all parties present. We anchored (in a sweet little cove) at the mouth of a fresh-water creek, where we were sufficiently sheltered by a projecting point; and in due time were as comfortably established as we had been on the day before. We were, in fact, in a tolerably secure harbor for such small fry of sea-going craft as pirates on this coast do affect. Now, piracies were known to have been committed along this coast; at least report so affirmed. And one object, if not the most important, of our expedition, as the Colonel had told me, was to look into this matter; and the men had come fully armed. These reports of pirates infesting the waters along this coast, and harboring on these islands, came through the Spanish fishermen established at Charlotte Harbor, who occasionally visited the military post with fruit, dried pompino, a most delicious fish found in that bay, and other articles for sale. And Maximo, who had learned from some of his people that this little harbor was suspected to be one of the resorts of gentry of the stamp referred to, had brought the Colonel here to see for himself, and then take such measures as he might deem necessary and requisite to root out the horde.

As soon, therefore, as we were established in our camp, the Colonel directed me to take half a dozen men and make a detour around our position, and to examine carefully for any evidence discernible of the presence of men, whether recently or at a more remote period, in the vicinity. I ordered a corporal and six men to turn out under arms, and shouldering my rifle moved out, with Maximo at their head. As soon as we had advanced from the rushes and marsh-plants in the pine woods, I ordered the men into line, and with widely extended front we swept the woods in search of "*sign*,"—as any evidence of the presence now or previously of wild beast or man, is in hunter's phrase termed.

Before we had proceeded far, Maximo, who was at my side, called my attention to two pine trees which showed the blackened marks of fire from the root several feet upwards. We turned towards them, and on reaching the spot, discovered a spring which poured its tribute into the creek beyond. Near this were the remains of a camp-fire, around which we picked up the remnants of several little articles once the property of white men, evidently not of Indians. Among these was a three-pound iron shot, such as is fired from a swivel-gun sometimes used on board of smaller vessels; there were also the broken pieces of a looking-glass and its stand, in which was a drawer bound in red paper with border printed in gold; such as you may have seen in German toy-shops in your city. As our search progressed, we approached the burned trees, some ten paces off; here we discovered pieces of new or little worn hemp rope, about half-inch size, burned at the ends.

Around one of the trees, which were about a foot in diameter, a portion of this rope had been tied at the height of four to five feet from the ground, and it still remained knotted round the tree, though the ends were burned off. Near the other tree were found similar pieces of rope, also partially burned.

"There has been bad work here!" uttered Maximo, in a slow and serious tone.

"Can it be possible that men have been burned to death, or even put to torture?" I asked.

"It looks very ugly," replied the man in the same tone; and after a pause he continued, "but let us look further."

We did resume the search; and my men having been called in by my signal, every foot of ground for a long distance around was carefully examined, but without a trace of anything being detected that could throw light upon the matter. It was clear, however, that if persons had been burned here, either to death, or to any degree, their bodies had been carried away. As to the time at which this mysterious act had taken place, we were also in great doubt. There had been rain since the occurrence—that was plain enough; but nothing more satisfactory could be arrived at. In a dry atmosphere like that of Florida, the process of decomposition or decay is very slow.

After having searched the immediate vicinity of this scene so strange and full of interest, and pondering it in my own mind without more satisfactory data on which to found an argument, I ordered my men again into line, and with a front that covered a wide extent of country pursued my exploration. Having completed a wide survey of the country to the right and left of our position, and without further result, I returned to camp about sunset, and reported to the Colonel. He listened attentively to my account, and was evidently as much puzzled as myself. But although he seemed unwilling to put the worst construction on it, he wrote, on our return here, to Washington, requesting that the revenue cutters stationed on the coast of Louisiana and West Florida might be ordered to cruise occasionally along this coast, and look in upon us at the garrison. While on this subject, I may as well tell you that, during our further progress up the coast, and in the course of examinations made at several places on our homeward voyage, nothing more was discovered of the haunts of pirates. No one, however, seemed to entertain a doubt that we had fallen upon one of their places of occasional resort, though perhaps not lately visited by them.

The next morning, before the coming day grew gray in the east, Maximo and his assistant were astir. The latter was a Spanish-Indian half-blood from Charlotte Harbor; a very powerful man, well formed, though rather stout, as quiet and obedient as a spaniel, and could dive deeper, and stay under water longer, than any man I ever saw. The Colonel had directed Maximo to bring with him his turtle-seine, his "*peg*," and all other appliances for hunting the green turtle; and the latter, with the spirit of an ardent fisherman, was thus early in motion to "*try*" after turtle on the side of the islands next the gulf.

The green turtle feeds principally on marine plants, but more especially the plant here called "*turtle-grass*," which is found on the outside of the Keys. As it grows in tolerably deep water, the turtles dive after it, and cutting it off at the roots close to the sand, eat the tender part only: the remainder comes to the surface; and where the animals are numerous, large fields of this herbage are formed. Indications of this had not escaped the sagacious observation of the fishermen, and hence their wish to be upon the spot before the turtle came to feed.

As the Colonel had decided to remain here one day, he was not abroad as early as usual. So, before breakfast, as I strolled upon the beach in front of my tent, I saw a large flock of the white ibis, or, as it is called here, *Becrochs*, settle down at the water's edge near by. I ran for my fowling-piece, and giving them both barrels, brought down eleven of them. This bird, somewhat to my surprise, I found on the table excellent. After breakfast I walked out with the Colonel to look at the remains of the pirate camp, as we called it. Here, as we examined particularly everything about the place, the probabilities *pro* and *con* were pondered, but without our being able to form any satisfactory conclusions in our own minds. Towards noon, Lambert and the crew of the gig were put in requisition, and I accompanied the Colonel in an aquatic excursion around the Key directly in front of us. It was a very pretty island, four or five miles long, rising in the centre some twenty or thirty feet above the water. We did not land; but coming-to in a cove or deep bend in the land, we threw out our lines and in a little while caught sheephead and redfish enough for dinner. On our return we saw Maximo coming in with his canoe, having apparently something in tow. On his arrival we had the pleasure to see two green turtles drawn on shore. They were each over one hundred pounds in weight. The men had discovered their feeding-ground, and had succeeded in entangling these two in their seine. While we were standing here, listening to Maximo's amusing account, half English, half Spanish, of his morning's success, he stopped suddenly as his eye happened to glance out seaward, and steadily gazing at some object where I could perceive none, he said to me, —

"Adjutant, do you see a small speck on the water just here," pointing with the finger of his outstretched arm.

I looked intently in the direction indicated, and saw something that looked like a chip lying upon the calm water. "Is that what you refer to, Maximo?" I asked, rather doubtingly.

"Yes, Señor," he replied, "that is the back of a green turtle asleep on the water, and not many men see that this time of year."

He then told me that at this season the turtles keep themselves in deep water, and do not come near land except to feed. He then asked me if I would like to capture him with the "*peg*." I expressed my delight at the idea.

"You shall do it in two minutes," he said with emphasis; and springing into the canoe, he seized his weapon and sprang on shore again. He placed it in my hand,

and directed me to strike near the vertebræ, or, in other words, close on one side of the ridge which projects along the medial line of the animal's upper shell. The why and wherefore of this caution I must explain to you, although it will require fifty times the words with which the little man's injunction was conveyed to me, who, in fact, knew all about it previously, though I had never been called upon before to put it in practice. Know then, most learned friend, that there arises from the under side of the real vertebræ a consolidated process extending laterally until it meets the true shell at a distance of four to six or more inches, according to the age and size of the animal. This leaves a vacant space between those two shells, which is greatest next to the vertebræ. This arrangement, no doubt intended by nature as an additional strength and defence against injury, the quick discernment of some veteran turtle-hunter, the inventor of the peg, has availed himself of to produce a weapon with which to capture infallibly his victim, without inflicting a wound that will in any way affect its health. This instrument consists of a square-sided piece of steel, one inch long and half an inch wide: one-fourth of an inch at one end is required to form the point, which of course is a four-sided pyramid; one-fourth of an inch above the base of this pyramid is a shoulder, a quarter of an inch in thickness, and projecting one-fourth of an inch on each face of the peg; the remaining fourth of an inch of the length of the peg is firmly inserted into the small end of a conical socket, into which the staff fits loosely. To an iron ring at the upper end of the socket is made fast a cord, or redfish-line, of forty or fifty feet. This cord or line is passed through a loop of the same cord, the strands of which are separated and plaited in a flat band neatly around the staff near the lower end, which loop, when the peg strikes the turtle and the staff flies out of the socket, prevents the escape and loss of the staff. Now, when the turtle is struck, the peg enters the shell but half an inch, and there is stopped by the shoulder of the peg; but the shell of the animal instantly contracts upon that portion of the peg which is square, a quarter of an inch only, with such a firm, grasping force that no effort of the animal can effect its removal.

Trusting that I may have made myself intelligible, I will proceed with my narrative. Maximo, after instructing me how to strike, fastened the end of the line to an iron ring in the bow of the canoe and took his seat in the stern, and with a motion of his hand invited me to step into the bow. I must also tell you, before I go further, that immediately after our arrival at Hillsborough in February, I procured a canoe; and taking great delight in managing it while hunting ducks, I soon became an adept in propelling the little craft, as well as preserving my balance in any position sitting or standing; so that when I stepped into the canoe and took my place standing in front, staff in hand, it was not at all as a novice in this species of navigation. Maximo quietly put his paddle into the water, and with a sculling movement of hand drove the canoe forward with a motion so light and steady that not the slightest ripple was produced to warn the animal of our approach. Nearly ten minutes were required to reach our prey: it seemed to me an age. As we drew near the sleeping animal, I could hear him breathe; Maximo had directed his course a little to the right, just enough to leave my right arm free, and at a preconcerted signal, as we came within fifteen feet of the turtle, I with a steady eye launched my shaft; I heard the peg strike; the staff flew off; the line swiftly uncoiled. Maximo called to me to sit down, and the little man plied his paddle with a savage fierceness and rapidity that astonished me, following the direction taken by the turtle.

He led us a fearful race, sometimes drawing the bow of the canoe down nearly to the water's edge, in spite of Maximo's almost superhuman efforts to keep the line slack. At last his speed began to diminish, and in a little while after, his broad shell, bottom up, floated to the surface; he was drowned. I cannot deny that I was greatly elated as Maximo came forward and drew in the line.

"*Buenos dias tenga usted, Señor,*" (Good morning, sir,) said Maximo, addressing the turtle, as he drew him alongside, and placed his hand upon the armpit of the animal. "He is fat," he continued, turning to me, "and a good two hundred."

Then it was that I learned, that, to ascertain the condition of a turtle, you must feel under the armpit, or, in other words more fitting for ears polite, at the hollow where the forearm or fin comes from under the lower shell; if at that point the flesh is firm and fills well up and even with the shell, the animal is fat; if the part is sunken and flabby, he is in poor condition. Maximo now undid the fastening of the line to the ring at the bow, and carried it to the stern, where he made it fast with short-end line; and we then steered for our camp. On landing, we found the Colonel, who had been an interested spectator of our movements, still on the beach. He congratulated me very cordially on my success. The turtle was now drawn out upon the white sand where we stood. Maximo approached and asked very demurely,—

"Would the Adjutant be pleased to draw the peg?"

I knew it required very considerable strength, though I have never seen it done. However, I thought I must make the effort. I therefore approached the turtle, who lay, as I may say, in his upright posture, and placing one foot against his side, I made the trial; it was entirely futile: I then stepped upon his back, placed one foot on each side of the peg, for I had planted it in the right place, and winding the cord round both hands, pulled with all my might, until my eyes felt as if they were going to pop out of my head, but with no better success. Maximo then took his place on the back of the turtle; he was not tall, but was stout and strong, as I had already seen, as a lion. After several tugs he brought the peg out; it required, however, all the force he could exert. So you see the contractile power of this bone is wonderful; the plug being perfectly smooth, without barbs or anything that could aid in holding it.

I have written you a long letter, and will now bid you good night. Adieu.

HILLSBOROUGH BAY, January 4, 1828.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—I have the pleasure to inform you that I shall soon be in motion again. To me this is always agreeable. The intelligence I have to communicate is this: The commanding officer has received orders from Washington to open a Military Road from this post to Alachua, about one hundred and twenty miles to the north. My company (as I style that of which I still retain the command) is one of two detailed for this service; and we are ordered to commence the work at this point immediately.

As we shall very soon leave the Barracks and pitch our camp some ten miles in advance, I must try to finish my account of our expedition to Anclote Keys to-night. On the morrow succeeding the day, an account of the acts and exploits of which were recorded in my last letter, we arrived at our destination after a delightful sail, and anchored in Anclote River. Nothing can surpass the freshness and the happy temperature of the atmosphere along this whole coast, and I can assure you, it contributed in no small measure to the enjoyment in which our little party, of both high and low degree, participated. This, together with the *bonhomie* of the Colonel, his kindness and generosity on all occasions, has left a lasting impression upon my mind of pleasures without alloy, inseparably linked with my recollections of the expedition to Anclote River. Beloved by his men, the Colonel is the most indulgent of commanding officers, without ever losing sight of what is required of every man in the discharge of his appropriate duties.

I have not, at this moment, time to enter into the particular account of each day of the three or four we passed at this camp. But as there was nothing extraordinary occurred, I will simply state that we hunted, fished, and captured green turtles, to the satisfaction of all parties. Besides delicious soup and steaks from the turtle I had captured with the "*peg*," we had venison, wild turkey, and several kinds of fish in great plenty; therefore we fared bravely, or rather I should say, we feasted morning, noon, and night. The Colonel, with Maximo, took with the seine eight green turtles, which, with the two before taken, made ten taken alive. These were by Maximo tied to stakes in shoal water, and regularly fed with *turtle-grass*, which Juan dived after and brought up in quantities when it happened to be too deep for the oyster-tongs. I made several excursions up Anclote River, accompanied always by a couple of men with muskets. On these occasions I bagged two deer and four turkeys, besides a few partridges, which, by the by, appeared to me rather smaller than our Northern bird, and somewhat differently marked.

At length, when the day fixed upon for our return came round, the turtles were carefully laid upon their backs in the different boats, to be staked out and fed at night. In fine, we arrived safely and without further adventure. I must not omit to report that the turtles came to hand in perfect health, and were duly introduced to other members of their family in the crawl. It is amusing to see Maximo with his pets; when one is wanted for the table, he dives down, the water in the crawl being between three and four feet, and brings up a turtle in his arms; this he places upon its back on the surface of the water, and supports it with his left hand beneath the shell, while with his right he ascertains the condition of the animal by feeling under the arm. If the turtle is not fat, he is turned over and allowed to find his way to the bottom again. Maximo then dives after another, and so on till he finds one that pleases him. You must be content now, dear friend, with a short letter, and perhaps a long interval before you get another. I may not write again before we reach Alachua. Adieu.

ALACHUA, March 29.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—Here we are at the end of our road. All are rejoiced at the termination of our labors. No soldier likes "*fatigue duty!*" It stands on the *Roster* below "*Duty under Arms;*" and every good soldier's pride leads him to rejoice when detailed on the latter, while he dislikes or even detests the former. I never knew but one instance of a soldier volunteering for fatigue; this was an old countryman whom I enlisted in the Cherokee country. He had been living some time with the Indians, when his eccentricities, which had before caused him to remove from the society of his relatives and friends in Missouri, drove him from the association, illy judged and unfortunate in its termination, with the red man. Donnelly, for that was his name, came to my tent one morning with his rifle and leather garments, and asked me to enlist him. A little conversation with the man satisfied me that he was well educated, and had the manners and address of a person of highly respectable standing. I enlisted him, although he was above the age allowed by law. In a few weeks the men became acquainted with his eccentricities, but were rather amused than annoyed by them; and Donnelly became every day more and more a favorite with the company.

One day, while on a march, at a point where we were to remain for some days, I directed my First Sergeant to turn out a fatigue party of ten men to clear the ground about my tent. Soon after the work was commenced, I heard a hearty laugh from the party at work, and one of the men called out,—

"Well! Donnelly, you are the first man I ever knew to volunteer on fatigue duty." To which my old recruit replied,—

"I heard the Sergeant say the Captain wanted the ground about his tent cleared in *short order*, and I came to do what the Captain wanted done promptly." Another good-natured laugh followed. I then called the old man to me and thanked him for his well-meant zeal, but told him there were a sufficient number of men called out and that he might return to his tent, which he did with a low *bow*. In this case—I speak now of the road-cutters—it was somewhat different. We were simply taken from the fatigue duty of building Barracks, Block Houses, Guard Houses, and Wharves, and put upon that of opening roads where we had, instead of the irksome labor of the former, the profits of either acquired knowledge, or the pleasure to be derived from unexpected incidents springing up in the course of our progress.

Here, even at this moment, there recurs to me a story apparently incredible, although vouched for by an officer of rank in a conversation with myself not long ago, and who, then a Lieutenant, was with the army on the Canada frontier when the incident occurred, and was personally acquainted with the facts as well as with the officer of whom the story is told.

It was in the earlier period of our war with Great

Britain of 1812–15, when General Brown was in command on our northern frontier, that he ordered a military road to be opened from some one point to another, distant about ten miles. This would have required the labor of a company of seventy or eighty men about one month, as the forest was dense. The detail fell upon a Captain of the —— Regiment, afterwards one of the most distinguished Generals of the United States Army,—distinguished not only for his personal gallantry, but for his quick discernment, sound judgment and decision in battle.

He marched with his company armed with axes, at reveille, and to the surprise of his Colonel returned with his company the evening of the same day. He was sent for by his Colonel to explain such extraordinary conduct. When asked why he had brought his company back to camp, he replied with perfect simplicity of manner,—"that he had commenced cutting the road of the required width—sixty feet—but that as he proceeded it grew narrower and narrower, till at last, about sunset, the two sides of the road came together against an enormous tree, whereupon he had returned."

This extraordinary conduct was reported to General Brown, who sent for the officer. On being asked to explain a procedure so unprecedented, he respectfully replied, "that he knew how to lead his company in battle; but that he knew nothing about opening roads."

His interview with the General was protracted, during which the latter perceiving that this young officer was as full of talent of high order as of resources of the kind just exhibited, (that is to say, of fencing off a duty he deemed, in his ignorance of the real duty of a soldier, to be derogatory,) pardoned this whimsical act, and gave him orders to join the staff of the Adjutant-General of his army. This distinguished officer has many years since paid the debt of nature; as has likewise my informant, a dear and much valued friend, quite recently; but I have no reason to doubt the facts as related to me.

"*Mais revenons a nos moutons.*" Some ten days or more after breaking ground, we reached the Little Hillsborough River, an affluent of the principal river of that name. As we had to erect a bridge over this stream, we were encamped on its banks some days. The only thing worthy of note in regard to this river, is a curious fact that was first communicated to me by an Indian: namely, that when the main river is flooded, it forces its waters up this stream and empties them through Fish Creek, whose *debouchure* is a mile or more to the east of the mouth of the Big Hillsborough. This assertion was to me so surprising that I determined to investigate the matter before we left our present camp; and I did so to my entire satisfaction. At the distance of two miles, perhaps, below our bridge, this stream pours its tribute into the Big Hillsborough. The former rises to the south of our camp, runs northwest until within a few hundred yards of its mouth, when it makes a sudden turn to the southwest and unites with the larger river at an angle of about sixty or seventy degrees; so that, as strange as it would seem, the larger stream must, to fulfil the Indian's statement, not only overcome the force of the minor stream,—no mean current,—but it must drive its waters back at an angle less than a right angle with the direction of its own current. This fact being established, I followed the Little Hillsborough to its source, about five miles above our bridge. Here in the pine barren, on a slightly elevated plateau, I found a small lake, the source of our river. Directly south of this were two other lakes whose waters were connected by a small stream or channel, and these two lakes I saw were the origin from which Fish Creek received its current. These lakes were not more than one hundred and fifty yards from the one first mentioned, and there was at present no connection between their waters. The one first alluded to was evidently on the summit level, though the difference was trifling. On further examination, however, I discovered a dry channel leading from the single to the double lake, and all along this gully, the reeds and other plants were bent down towards the double pond, showing clearly which way the water had run. The nearly level country through which the Little Hillsborough flows; the wide extent of country which is drained by the Big Hillsborough, and the high and narrow rocky gorge but a short distance below the advent of the waters of the lesser river, fully and satisfactorily explained to me this, at first, inexplicable phenomenon.

Our next point of interest in opening this road, was at the river Hillsborough proper. The Indian name of this river is "*Lockcha-popka-chiska,*" "*Acorn-eating-river;*" in other words, the river to which we come to eat acorns. As we had to bridge this fine river, we were encamped on its left bank, an elevated bluff, several weeks. As the work progressed, I was with my men one morning before breakfast; two of the three trestles upon which the bridge was to rest being set erect and pinned together temporarily, simply by boards tacked on to them and to a log upon the bank to keep them in position until the third trestle was raised, which the men with ropes were at that moment bringing to its upright position; I observed our most worthy and esteemed Surgeon seated on the trestle nearest to me. I had just thought of walking up the steep board leading from the river-bank to the trestle where the Surgeon sat, in order to have a little pleasant chat with him before breakfast, when the third trestle, which the men were in the act of raising, and which our chief carpenter Plew, standing on the middle trestle, was preparing to fasten to the one on which he stood—lo and behold!

trestle No. 3 swings beyond its perpendicular, through the over-strain upon the rope in the hands of the men on the opposite bank, who were raising it. It throws the men who hold the guy, by a sudden jerk, into the river, and striking with its great weight the middle trestle, drives that against No. 1 with sufficient force to send it with double velocity against the bank. The Doctor, who, as I have said, sat upon the last trestle, described the arc of the circle, still seated and with perfect composure, until the trestle rudely strikes upon the bank, when he is precipitated backwards into the water six or eight feet deep. As he rises again to the surface, I, with one of the men, spring to the spot, and we draw him out unharmed, though thoroughly chilled and *minus* his gold spectacles. Plew, who was on the highest trestle, at least twelve feet from the water, boldly jumped clear of the debris and swam to shore. The old fellow, a private of company C, was lifted up the bank by some of the men, when the first words he uttered, as he shook himself like a great Newfoundland dog, were: *"Chalk and all gone!"* it having so happened that his chalk and line, which were lying on the trestle, were swept down the current, and could not be replaced short of Fort Brooke. The Doctor's spectacles were afterwards found by an Indian at the river-ford below, to which point they had been carried by the swiftness of the current and there stranded. I should add, that my excellent friend, the Surgeon, experienced no serious inconvenience from the accident; and, except that occasioned by the loss of his glasses, looked upon the thing as a fair subject for a good hearty laugh. Adieu.

ALACHUA, March, ——.

When the work at Hillsborough was completed, we pushed on and soon opened a road to the Amaxura or Withlocoochee. The old Spanish name Amaxura, given to this river probably in the sixteenth century, is now nearly obsolete; the Indian titular designation being the one, I believe, almost universally used. Withlocoochee is compounded of the words *weewa*, water, and *thlock-ko*, broad, *i. e.* Broad River; the name having reference to the width at its mouth and for some miles above.

The point selected for crossing this stream was a gorge where the river had forced its way through a pine bluff, the first obstruction to its passage to the Gulf of Mexico met with in its descent from the fountain-head. Here the stream is narrow, and was bridged at a cost of no great labor.

The first leisure day after encamping here, (which in truth I must confess was on Sunday,) I set out with Captain Yancey and a youth of twelve summers, the son of our excellent surgeon, to explore as far as we might in a single day the country bordering on the upper river. We set out on foot with our guns, not wishing to expose our horses to the treacherous cypress bottoms, where in an instant and without warning they might be engulfed past retrieving. We had not proceeded more than two or three miles before we encountered a branch of the river margined like the river itself with heavily-timbered cypress land lying under a foot or two of water. Through this we penetrated to the banks of the stream, which we found to be deep and sluggish. We were, therefore, compelled to retrace our steps, and undertake the task of heading the stream. This gave us a good five mile tramp; but we accomplished it without meeting with accident or adventure, and then struck in towards the river. Before we reached the river, the afternoon was well advanced; but we had not come thus far to return without knowing something more of the country we had set out to explore, and it was decided to proceed up the river until we should come to a country of more promise than that through which we had hitherto been toiling, namely, cypress swamp on one side and a coarse wet grass prairie on the other. Our perseverance was at length rewarded with the sight of pine timber; and in a little while we trod upon dry land for the first time since we left our camp a mile behind us. The sun was now setting in a bright-red horizon, and while watching its dilated orb as it passed away to enliven other lands, I discovered a fine fox squirrel, the only game we had met with during the day; I speedily brought him to the earth, and as I stooped to pick up the animal, Yancey's gun sung out the requiem of its mate. This success announced to us satisfactorily as we could desire, that we had reached without mistake the pine barren country, where alone this squirrel inhabits. Having discovered at a little distance the large spreading head of a noble live-oak, it was at once agreed that under its sheltering branches our camp-fire should be lighted. A few "*lightwood knots*," as the half burned forks of pine-tree branches are called, were soon ignited by the flash of powder in the pan of one of our guns, whose vent or touch-hole had previously been stopped by a little wooden plug, in order to save the load of powder and ball or shot; and having piled on a goodly supply of dry wood, our clothing, so long saturated with cypress-stained water, was soon dried. Having for a time enjoyed the bright glare reflected from the dense canopy above us, and having our chilled limbs revivified, we suffered the fire to subside while we prepared the squirrels for our evening meal. These, when ready for the fire, were each spitted on the top of a spicewood branch, the other end of which was sunk into the ground; and thus standing erect they were in a little while roasted to a turn. This squirrel, the largest of its generical class in our country, is remarkably fine for the table, and we really had a very good supper; for which a walk of at least twenty miles had duly prepared us.

The cypress timber to-day was magnificent,—it was the largest I had ever seen, towering to a height I am afraid to estimate. Supper having been dispatched, we cut a few leaves of the saw-palmetto for our beds, threw more wood on the fire, and lying down were soon—at least I can speak for one—wrapt in the arms of Morpheus.

In the morning we took a look at the country for some miles around. It proved to be pine land, here and there interspersed with oak and hickory, indicating a soil strong enough to raise good crops of cotton. Afterwards taking a more direct route than the one by which we came, and walking rapidly, the noon of that day saw us at camp again. Some ten days after this, having finished the bridge over this stream, we moved forward without meeting with anything of particular interest until we reached the largest affluent of the river, which has been designated as the "Little Withlocoochee." This creek (for I cannot call it river) likewise required a bridge, which was accordingly thrown over it; and then again we dashed into a dense thicket of oak and hickory with an undergrowth almost impenetrable to anything less potent than an elephant or the American felling-axe. Eighty stout axe-men, however, made everything fly before them, and in one day we made our way through all impediment, and were again in the pine woods, the sweet balsamic atmosphere of which is so exhilarating in the early mornings of our cloudless days: nothing could be more health-inducing.

Onward the command went with spirits as cheerful as the bright sun of those cloudless days, until, with expectation fully roused, we reached the shore of Orange Lake, that fairy land of gorgeous vegetation. Almost throughout the territory, wherever I have been, Florida abounds in vegetable productions in endless variety and of the most luxuriant growth. The majestic appearance of its towering forest-trees, the brilliant colors of its flowering vines and shrubs, call forth one's admiration and wonder wheresoever he turns, unless it be perchance when toiling through the monotonous and almost airless pine-barren, or half immersed in the drear and gloomy cypress swamp. In the latter, forsooth, he may find enough to excite his wonder, if not his admiration. Here he cannot but gaze in wonder at the enormous shafts of the cypress-trees, which support their broad, flat, umbrella-shaped tops at the distance of a hundred and twenty or more feet above the earth. Nor will he indeed be less bewildered as he contemplates the smooth reddish "*knees*" or excrescences that apparently spring from the roots of the trees and surround him on all sides to the height of four or five feet, without leaf or sign of life.

Whilst the pines and cedars reach immense size on the poorer lands, the hickory and several of the oaks attain as great altitude in the better soil which their presence indicates, and the live-oak, seeking the shell-hummocks, continues to increase in bulk till centuries have crowned it as the king of the forest. Such is the general aspect of Southern Florida as far as has come under my notice. But here around this beautiful lake nature seems almost to have exhausted invention in preparing for herself an abode where peace, adorned with all that is exquisite in climate, all that is beautiful in scenery, might love to dwell. The margin of the lake is a broad belt of orange groves, extending for miles upon miles. This belt of land, which is of great fertility, has been devoted to the orange. No tree, no shrub of meaner growth has been permitted to infest the soil. But here and there a grand and conspicuous object is seen rising to the height of a hundred feet above the oranges. This is the Magnolia Grandiflora, whose symmetrically-conical head glistens with dark-green foliage. It was the middle of the month of January, and the orange-trees were loaded with fruit, so that the canopy overhead was of green and gold, almost equally divided, and profusely spangled with minute white flowers of delicious odors.

Turning from this gorgeous scene, I looked out upon the lake whose clear waters stretch some eighteen miles in length by three or four in width, and what a charming view was there presented to my eyes! I gazed long and intently as I followed the sinuations of the shores, and the swell or depression of them as they gradually diminished in the distance. The "*spectacle*," as the French say, was truly refreshing; but as the sun had passed the meridian, and as my morning meal had been taken as the same sun had cast his first rays upon this fruitful land, I only lingered a few minutes longer to take a parting look at a green island which at the distance of half a mile raised its head above the bright water, before I turned my attention to the inviting spectacle presented by the orange-trees in my rear. This orange is what is called here the "*bitter-sweet*." As I knew it would be some hours before our camp would be established and dinner served, I plucked several large oranges fresh from the trees, and ate them with much relish. The fruit would not be considered comparable to the China orange, which is cultivated at Pensacola and, as I understand, somewhat extensively at St. Augustine, on the Atlantic coast; yet it is refreshing, and by no means unpalatable. Nature has been so bountiful in the bestowal of her gift of miles upon miles of groves of this prolific tree, that the improvident children of the wilderness hesitate not to lay the axe to the root of the tree as the most convenient mode of gathering the fruit.

I counted half a dozen trees near where I stood that had but recently been hacked down with the tomahawk, simply for this purpose. I was told by our interpreter that an Indian who "*wants to eat oranges*" encamps with his family somewhere on the edge of the grove, cuts down a tree, fills his blanket, and they all fall to and eat oranges for a week at a time, taking no other food. Whether this is done as a sanitary or perhaps religious observance, I am unable to say, but the fact seems to be established beyond question. A family, which had been encamped about a mile from us, brought us the next day a large earthen jug containing about a gallon of the juice of the orange, which they disposed of at twenty-five cents a quart. It made, with a little sugar and water, quite a pleasant beverage.

As the sun rose the following morning, (we are always abroad at the peep of day,) I looked out upon the lake, when, to my no little surprise, the island I had observed the previous day had disappeared, and on further examination the water of the lake seemed to have receded from the shore nearly one hundred yards. It was not until I walked down to the *shore* of the lake that I discovered that the island I had noticed the day before had drifted with the wind against the shore where I stood. These floating islands, which, as I afterwards learned, are found in many parts of Orange Lake, are formed by the growth of a strictly speaking "*water-plant*."

Of this singular plant the roots do not fix themselves in the earth, but float upon the surface of the water, deriving all their sustenance from that element—or rather I should say *fluid*—and the carbon of the atmosphere. As the individual plants are brought in contact by the motion of the water, their roots, which are long and ramous, become interlaced, and in time, as they grow and increase and multiply their branches, become firmly united and compact as a mat. Upon this floor, as it were, the foliage as it falls becomes decomposed, and at length forms, in fact, a little soil, upon which the seeds of other plants dropped by the birds vegetate and spring up; some of them even at this season rearing their spikes of yellow flowers above the rest of their associates.*

At noon this day the working parties reached our camp, which you will understand had been pitched in advance. Near the road, which here followed the course of a ridge extending some miles in front of us, I came unexpectedly upon one of the strange features of this strange land. I refer to the "*Limestone sinks*," as they are called. I was very near walking into a fissure in the rock, which just cropped out for the space of about six feet square, and was partially concealed by the tall grass and bushes which grew around. Making my way cautiously to the brink, I looked down what was as much like the well you often see at the side of a farm-house as you can well imagine. The opening in the rock was elliptical or nearly circular, of six feet in diameter. It was eighteen feet deep, as I subsequently ascertained, and the walls almost as regular as they might have been had they been built by the hands of an unskilful stone-mason. When I say eighteen feet, I mean to the surface of the water; how deep below that I had not the means of ascertaining. I looked down into the pellucid water, and there saw seven or eight fish, apparently of the Pike family, and eight or ten inches in length; they were about a foot below the surface. Having watched their movements some time, I let fall a very small piece of stone into the water, when, like a flash, they all disappeared; and as they darted off laterally, I concluded that the sink expanded at that depth. In a minute or two the fish returned to the light, and remained generally stationary.

I then went to my tent for a small fishing-line, which, having baited with a common earth-worm, I carefully let

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* See note at the end of this work.

down amongst the fish. As the hook touched the water, they all disappeared as before; but as I kept my line perfectly immovable, in less than a minute they were around my hook, and I entertained sanguine hopes of soon having some of the little beauties in my possession. These hopes, however, were destined to disappointment. I saw several of them pass close to the bait without paying the slightest attention to it. My patience exhausted; I began to devise some other means of capturing these stupidly hungerless fish. Pike, I knew, were easily taken with a noose or running knot slipped over the head while resting quietly, perhaps asleep, at the surface; but how the noose would act at the depth of a foot or more, I had some doubts; nevertheless I resolved to try it. I walked round among the wagon-mules till I met with one rejoicing in a flowing tail; from this I succeeded, at the risk of a salute from his heels, in withdrawing a small lock. Having plaited a strong noose which would run beautifully on the slightest pressure being applied, I repaired to a small pond I had a few days before discovered at the distance of a quarter of a mile on the opposite side of the road, around which there was a cane-break, producing some remarkably fine canes. With a hatchet I succeeded in procuring one of these full twenty feet long. To the extremity of this, when stripped of its leaves, I fastened my noose. Then, lying down upon my breast, I introduced my noose into the water by very slow and extremely carefully measured approaches to the depth of the fish, without alarming them.

Then by imperceptible advances I got it over the head of one of the largest of them, and when encircling the middle of his body I gave a sudden jerk, thinking, poor mortal, in my vain reckoning, that the prize was surely mine; but the pike was out of sight before the noose could close upon him. It was no doubt the motion of the water at that depth, as I had apprehended, that gave him intimation of danger, and prompted him to dart away ere the snare could be drawn. I made, perhaps a dozen trials with no better success — always succeeding in passing the slip-knot over the head of the pike, but never accomplishing his capture.

We remained encamped upon the borders of Orange Lake for three days, during which we all ate freely of the fruit "*à la sauvage*," without experiencing any ill effects.

I omitted to mention, that after failing to secure a single pike of those inhabiting this subterranean stream, to which this sink was an air-hole, I attempted to sound the bottom by tying my fishing line, sixteen feet long (with a bullet attached) to the end of the cane rod, which was twenty feet, but failed to reach bottom at, say, thirty-six feet.

Without further incident worthy of note, the command reached the goal of our labors at this place a few days since. To-morrow we set out on our return march. Adieu, *mon ami.*

P. S.—On the route I occasionally shot turkeys, partridges, and ducks, but no deer.

FORT BROOKE, March 30.

MY DEAR FATHER: — The days and weeks since we returned from Alachua, have quietly passed by without the happening of aught that is worth telling you. On the return march, however, I might have said in my last, that, as we reached our old camping-ground near Orange Lake, the idea occurred to me that a good opportunity was offered for the conveyance, to our gardens below, of a goodly store of young orange-trees. I, accordingly, had some of my men up before it was light, and marched them to the orange-groves with their spades. Here I took up one hundred seedlings of from two to three years old; these I had carefully put up in bundles of ten, and laid in one of the empty wagons. The season was late, it is true;

but these plants are hardy here, and the roots being wrapped in dampened Spanish moss, I had the satisfaction to see them arrive in good condition. I distributed them among the companies, and all appear to be doing well.

Spring is now well advanced. Most of the trees around us have persistent foliage, and their shedding is scarcely noticed, so gradual is it; but the deciduous ones are in full leaf already.

Among the latter, there is a hickory of one hundred feet in height growing upon a little mound, thirty feet in circumference and fifteen in altitude, one, perhaps, of those aboriginal mausoleums which mark the former residence of some extinct race of men. This tree, or, I should say, the mound on which it stands, is near the bay shore, in open ground, and has an uninterrupted view down the broad waters. It has a straight shaft of sixty feet, when it divides into three large limbs. Upon these limbs a platform six feet square has been placed, with benches and a railing round it. It is reached by a ladder, the shafts or frame of which were furnished by a single cypress sapling ripped in two with the saw. Here on this platform is a truly, grand, and delightful look-out, commanding a view of the bay as far as Long Point, which is distinct at the distance of fifteen miles. From this elevation, to which on a calm morning I often resort with a book, and pass the hours in reading, gazing, and contemplation, I have several times seen the Bald or White-headed Eagle pitch from the bared top of a lofty pine some distance down the bay, as he watched the coursing of the Osprey or Fish-hawk, and witnessed his successful plunge upon a fish, which with powerful talon and wing he was struggling to raise from the water and bear away to his hungry offspring. As the bold robber drew nigh the hawk, I heard his scream of fear and execration, as he endeavored by making rapid circles in the air to gain an elevation above that of his enemy. But the odds were against him, — loaded as he was with his well-earned prize, the disparity between himself and the powerful and unencumbered eagle was too great, — and soon the latter towered above him. On gaining this advantage, the eagle made a pitch at the head of the osprey, who, poor fellow! in all respects unequal to the contest, relinquished the fish and fled away. The eagle checked his own flight with a suddenness that was wonderful, — he remained for an instant motionless over the rapidly descending object of his cupidity, then closing his wings upon his body, he descended like a thunderbolt upon the fish, and took it in his talons before it reached the water. The air was calm, and where I sat I could hear the rush of his wings as he came down upon the fish; yet he had scarcely clutched it before he whirled gracefully and noiselessly upwards again, and apparently without an effort winged his way coolly to his eyry. Another time, while sitting in this charming retreat from the noise of camp, while I had an hour exempt from duty, I saw a pair of these eagles floating quietly over the water at a distance of not more than fifty yards from where I sat. As the white-headed eagle does not fish for himself, but is addicted to carrion of all kinds, as well as fish fresh from the salt-water, I was at a loss to divine the object or purpose of these great birds in circling round with heads turned aside, looking intently into the water; can it be, I asked myself, that they are looking with their carrion propensities for dead fish? But before I could turn this point in my mind — at the instant — two of the common "*American gulls*" came upon the scene, at a greater altitude than the eagles; as they passed over the latter, one of them darted perpendicularly at the female eagle, who was easily distinguishable by her superior size, and as it passed, touched, as I thought, the head of the eagle, and passed on. The latter, thus insulted as it were, paused an instant, closed her wings, and fell like a cannon-ball upon the gull, which she took up in her talons in passing, and sailed off, followed by her mate.

The weather is now delightful, though quite warm at mid-day. The alligators, who have laid torpid all winter, packed away in their dens in the river-banks, have come abroad to enjoy the genial sunshine, and to commit havoc on all animals who venture into the water which they inhabit. The Colonel lost a very fine Northern cow a few days ago by one of these monsters. She had waded into the river by the side of the wharf just about daylight or soon after, and, although almost under the eye of the sentinel, was seized by the udder, terribly lacerated and dragged under water, whence, in the course of the morning, her carcass floated to and lodged upon a little sand-spit not fifty yards below. Another officer lost a good pony much in the same way; he had waded into the water at noon to drink and cool his flanks, when he was caught by the hock and completely hamstrung. After suffering under such depredations, orders were given, as you may well suppose, that the sentinel posted at the wharf should fire upon every alligator that showed his nose above water. In this way quite a number have been killed.

The vitality of these reptiles is incredible to one who is a stranger to their nature and organization. Their vitality does not appear to be confined to any particular organ, as in the heart or brain, for instance, of animals of the higher classes, whose organs are more perfectly formed and more highly developed, but seems to be *distributed*, if I may venture so to say, throughout the system, or among the many more important organs, whose functions together maintain that mystery which we call life. The tenacity of life of the snake and the snapping-turtle is proverbial; the old saying that, at whatever hour of the day you may cut off their heads they die not till sunset, may with some show of truth be said of this great twenty-foot animal, the alligator;—one has been killed here that measured from the end of his snout to the tip of his tail eighteen feet. To give you some data on which you may base your faith in what I have asserted in general terms, I will give you my experience in one or two cases occurring under my own eyes. In the first place, I must tell you that a short time since, being on duty as officer of the day, I had made the round of visiting the different guards and sentinels, the last inspected being at the subsistence stores, in front of which is the wharf. I observed several officers seated under a large live-oak, just below the store-houses. Here, at ten o'clock in the morning, they were enjoying the refreshing sea-breeze then coming over the placid bay. I joined them with a glad appreciation of the shade and the delicious air so welcome after an hour's walk under a hot sun. I had not been many minutes in conversation with these gentlemen, when the top of an alligator's skull, his cold, hard, unmeaning eye, and the tip of his nose, all that he usually shows above water as he reconnoitres "the land ahead," appeared suddenly in the stream, not thirty yards from the sentinel's post. The latter happened to be a man of my own company, who was, I knew, a crack shot. I gave him a signal to fire. Without an instant's pause, he brought his musket to his shoulder and made a "snap-shot." The huge creature sprung half out of water, and falling upon his back, lashed the water with his tail. This was apparently a large fellow, and I directed two of the guard, who were standing by as spectators, to take a canoe that lay at the wharf and bring the reptile ashore. He was dragged up near to the tree under which we sat, and measured thirteen feet. As I wanted a good tooth from which to fashion a powder-charger for my rifle, I sent for an axe. With this the man struck two heavy blows, driving the edge of the axe up to the eye into the animal's skull, destroying, as one would think, all the brain, if any there was left after the shock produced by the musket-ball, which had passed entirely through it. I then directed the upper jaw to be chopped off just in front of the eyes, and sent it away to be boiled, in order to loosen the teeth, one of the largest of which I wanted, as already stated.

The largest tooth is the fourth in the lower jaw, which fits into a socket in the upper, and corresponds to the canine in the dog and cat families. I have had here an opportunity of correcting an error into which most persons have fallen with regard to the tongue of this animal; the impression and belief being that the alligator is destitute of that organ. He has, however, a large, fleshy tongue; it is flat and attached near its edges to the skin or flesh of the lower jaw. A curious arrangement of the soft palate prevents the water entering the lungs when the alligator seizes his prey under water. It hangs down so as to meet a cartilaginous plate projecting upwards from the lingual bone, and effectually closes the air-passage when the mouth is opened wide. But to return from this digression. While we still sat under the oak, perhaps half an hour after the alligator had undergone the operation so thoroughly performed by the axe-man, we were not a little surprised to see the fellow, who lay with his head turned from the water, rise upon his feet, wheel completely round, and walk directly into the water, a distance of about ten feet. He made his way through the bulrushes, at least ten feet more, until he reached a depth that brought the water to the top of his back, and there he lay, I presume, until the high tide floated him off, for he had not moved when the call of "Roast-beef" upon the drum and fife summoned us to dinner, at one o'clock. Another instance is a rather comical one that happened to myself. I had been out to ride, one morning, with Lieutenant Alexander, when, in returning, we saw in the road just in front of us, at the distance of a couple of hundred yards from the guard-house, an alligator about seven feet in length. He had come from the river, and was crossing the road to a pond near by. As we drew up for a moment to look at him, I happened to see lying by the road-side a pine pole of some ten feet long, and as thick as my arm, that had fallen from a passing wagon. This suggested to my mind the idea of having a little rencounter with the fellow, with a view to capture him if I could. Accordingly I dismounted, and giving the reins to Alexander, I seized the pole, which was quite as much as I could manage with both hands.

As I approached Mister Alligator, swinging the pole in quite a threatening attitude around my head, he showed no disposition to back out; but, on the contrary, he at once faced me and advanced boldly with head erect, and hissing like forty geese. I stopped to receive him, and as he came within reach, I brought the pine pole down upon his head with all the force I was master of. This neither appalled him nor checked his advance, and he continued his charge, slowly to be sure, but with great determination, still uttering his hissing defiance, and totally regardless of the heavy blows I continued to pile upon his head. I was compelled to move backwards to keep out of reach of his open jaws, but I continued to hammer him well over the head all the time. At length, my perseverance and the weight of the pine pole brought his head to the ground. I then took hold of the end of his tail with my left hand, and mounting my horse dragged my victim into the garrison. Having arrived at my quarters, I hitched my horse to the ring in a large live-oak in front, and leaving the alligator where he lay by the side of the horse, I entered my sitting-room where the company clerk was engaged in making out some Returns.

While standing at the table looking at his work, a loud shout and a merry laugh from the parade-ground called me to the door. Here I beheld my friend, Master Alligator, with head up, marching with great dignity across the parade-ground towards the soldiers' Barracks, while the men were collecting round him in high glee. Being much interested in my Returns to be sent to Washington by the vessel now looked for, I resumed my work and heard no more of the alligator. He of course was only stunned by the hammering he had received, but many of the blows I gave him would singly have killed a horse.

One more instance of tenacity of life I will give you. Last August, while hunting one day, accompanied by one of my men, I came upon an alligator's nest by the side of a large pond. Curious to look into it, I removed the top which was composed of bulrushes and mud to the height of four feet. Throwing off layer after layer, I found between each two, a layer of eggs, till on reaching the bottom we had thrown out between fifty and sixty. On opening them, they were rather larger than a goose-egg,—the young were found completely formed, but with the greater part of the yolk of the egg still attached to the umbilical cord. These eggs, with the exception of three which I carried to camp, were destroyed. On reaching my quarters, I opened two of the eggs for more accurate examination. They were in the same stage of advancement as those I had destroyed. I brought together these two—who had, the first thing on being liberated from the shell, opened their tiny mouths, and snapped their jaws in every direction all around. As soon as they were laid on the floor, their jaws were locked together, so that I could with difficulty drag them asunder. After close examination, I thrust them with my foot off the piazza.

They fell into loose sand, where I actually found them the next day before noon, still alive and kicking. I can write no more at present.

FORT BROOKE, Hillsborough Bay, May 20, 1830.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—We are now in genuine summer weather; hot enough, rain enough; green-corn roasting-ears enough; peas, beans, all garden-produce in abundance. Do you not envy us a climate so genial, so productive? Wild fruits are everywhere; cultivated fruits are wherever you will plant them and attend to them. Melons are already ripe; the water-melon is unexceptionable, and you may have several crops in the course of the year. I believe I told you I had seen them on the table on Christmas-day; this, however, was rather for show than because this warm-weather, watery, and refreshing fruit was seasonable. We live comfortably; indeed, I will say pleasantly; we have little military duty, while various buildings, block-houses, store-houses, powder-magazines, stables, and a hundred others are occupying the attention of the quartermaster and the commanding officer, and demanding the labor of all the enlisted men. The officers, when not engaged in these duties, have abundant time to hunt and fish. I have hunted a great deal, and I rather apprehend my letters have become tiresome by constantly harping upon the same theme. But I have little else to tell you of. The Indian character develops finely, at least so far as has come under my rather close observation.

The Seminole is certainly a shrewd yet patient observer, and is wonderfully well versed, practically, in astronomy and meteorology: he can calculate with more than ordinary accuracy the character of the weather twenty-four or even forty-eight hours ahead. I was talking, through an interpreter, a day or two since of the weather, with an intelligent man, a chief of one of the central towns, Holatu-chee; it was just after sunrise, and by accident I met him with the interpreter crossing the parade-ground as I came from inspecting my company quarters. We have the rainy season upon us, as I have just said, although the violent showers that characterized the season last year have not marked this. The sun had risen behind a heavy bank of cloud resting on the eastern horizon, and the clouds appeared to rise *pari passu* with the sun.

I called the attention of the chief to this fact, and asked him if it was going to rain. He replied, "If the sun makes haste and rises over the cloud and leaves it behind, then it will be fair weather; but if the black cloud comes up with him and keeps before him as it is now, until the sun comes *here*," pointing to the heavens at an angle of about thirty degrees above the horizon, "then a sensible man will seek a place to 'camp, and peel a pine-tree to make him a tent." Bidding the chief adieu, I returned to my quarters, and, seated on the piazza, watched the progress of the sun and the cloud in their portentous race. In a little while, the sun, indeed, did get his face halfway above the cloud, and glared upon the earth with a dubious and distrustful countenance; but his triumph was short-lived; before he had gained the point of elevation indicated by the chief, he was overtaken and passed by huge masses of clouds rolling gradually onward, and soon after the low growl of distant thunder announced the approach of the storm; and a most violent storm, indeed, it proved to be. Its prognostics, however, had been clearly understood and distinctly foretold by the Indian chief, although at this hour and at this season in this climature such storms are unfrequent. The rain continued to fall all that day, all night, and until ten A. M. the day following. As to his knowledge of the stars, I have on many occasions observed that the Indian is acquainted with the principal stars or constellations, such as the North-star, the Pleiades, Aldebaran, the Belt of Orion, and so forth, to which he gives names in his own language. For instance, as I now recollect, while we were opening the road to Alachua, I was one night, after supper, sitting at my camp-fire, when seeing an Indian boy about fifteen years old who had brought venison into our camp at sunset and had asked permission to remain during the night pass by my fire, I spoke to him, and asked him to be seated by the fire. He complied, and while smoking my silver-bowl pipe, made by an Indian silversmith while at Colonel Humphreys' Agency on the occasion of the inauguration of Tuko-see-mathla or John Hicks, I endeavored to improve my knowledge of the Seminole dialect. In this way I amused the hours till about midnight. All the fires were getting low, and the camp was wrapped in silence. Still I smoked and talked on, till the Indian youth, pointing to the Pleiades then in the zenith, said, "*Hey-a-ma, Kotzesumpa eparken,*" "*Behold the six stars,*"—"*Nochebuschee,*" "*It is time to sleep.*" As you know, only six of the seven stars of this group are visible to the naked eye, the Indians designate them as "*the six stars.*" In truth it was, as the boy said, time to be in the arms of Morpheus; so I bade him good night, and wrapping myself in my blankets on the lap of mother earth, was soon lost in sweet forgetfulness.

"But I must take you, now,
To those pois'nous fields with rank luxuriance crown'd,
Where the dark scorpion gathers death around;
Where at each step the stranger fears to wake
The rattling terrors of the vengeful snake."

I must carry you once more to Egmont Key, where I had rather an unpleasant encounter with a rattlesnake, and another still more unpleasant with a scorpion.

But to begin at the beginning, as the man did, when he prefaced his story with an account of the flood, I must inform you that (having nothing better to do, as I have hitherto intimated) I joined a party of four officers who proposed to pass a week, with consent of the commanding officer, on an expedition to cruise for pirates, from the mouth of Espiritu Santo along the coast as far as we thought it essential or agreeable; in other words, that we might mingle "*utile cum dulce*," in a week's prosecution of our military duty, together with the finest hunting and fishing imaginable. The little party consisted of four officers, Captain Yancey in command, one sergeant, two corporals, and sixteen privates, all armed. We set sail with the good and sea-worthy little schooner, the "John Casey," a double-banked, ten-oared boat, named after its builder, a soldier of the regiment; and a six-oared barge, in which were stowed a small seine and two fine dogs, old Enoch and young Die.

The wind was fair, and we had a delightful run down the Bay, making our port, a well-known cove on the inner shore of Millet Key, in six hours. After landing a party to pitch tents and prepare dinner, we put out with the *Casey* and ran along the northern coast to look for pirates. We landed several times at points favorable to our search, but met with nothing indicating the presence now or heretofore of man. At dark we returned. The spoils were a fine buck killed by Yancey. The deer *here* are *always* in *season*. This may appear to Northern men a *paradox*. It is really so in the true acceptation of the term. The climate, and more particularly that of the extreme southern part of Florida, owing to uniform temperature, so affects the Common American or Virginia Deer (we have no other species on the Atlantic slope) as to cause it to produce its young, not only within the limits of the spring months, but irregularly throughout the year.

I have seen the fawns but a day or two old in what is mid-winter with you at the North, and I have also seen the buck killed who still wore his horns in the middle or last of May and the early part of June,—at what period after that they were cast, I am unable to say. However all this may be, deer are shot at all seasons, and occasionally afford good venison when the right one is hit. The next morning at sunrise, having breakfasted, we divided our forces. One party was to go in the *Casey* down the coast to look for pirates, to fish, and hunt for turtle-eggs; the other party was to search the small islands near our camp, and bring in such varieties of quadruped and fowl as we had not yet been made acquainted with. I preferred deer-hunting, and therefore did not join either of the boat parties. Accordingly, I took with me two men to drive the island, with the dogs. The interior half of the island is hummock-land; the exterior is prairie or meadow, covered with salt-grass. The deer, when driven from the thicket, dash out on the plain; and I had the good luck to knock over two does in the course of the morning. The second one did not fall at the shot, but plunged into the hummock again and made for the water, followed closely by the dogs. I followed at a run, and when I came to the shore, I found that the dogs had the deer in the water about fifty or sixty yards from me. I at once entered the water and waded out breast-deep, to bring in the doe which was floating on the surface, while the dogs were mounting upon it with exulting cries of gladness. Just as I reached the spot and took hold of the deer to float it to shore, the barge came round a point of the island, and in a few minutes the men took it on board. I soon after took the dogs to camp for lunch. My men had previously come in with the deer first killed.

Soon after my return, the Doctor, who had remained at the camp in the morning, came in with two fine redfish.

One of these was soon prepared, and we sat down to a hot lunch fit for a king; indeed nothing could be more delicious than a fine redfish fresh from the sea.

After lunch, I filled my pipe with some precious tobacco which the Charlotte Harbor fishermen bring us from Havana; and recounted to the Doctor the incidents of the morning, and in return learned the history of his success. Half an hour passed in pleasant chat, we agreed to take our fishing-lines and stroll up the beach. The day being warm, we rather idly lounged by the water-side now and then throwing out our lines. Before sunset we had taken four redfish, about as much as we would have desired to carry. We then bathed and returned to camp. The boating party soon came home, delighted with their excursion. They brought in a deer and a quantity of waterfowl of different kinds. A glorious dinner wound up the pleasures of the day. I awoke at midnight with a violent cramp in the stomach, which the Doctor ascribed to my having gone into the water, while heated, in the course of the morning's hunt. As the pain was fearful, he gave me a large pill of opium. This soon relieved me, and then began the action of the drug upon the nervous system. I had never taken opium before, and knew nothing of its effects upon the nerves; but I can now very readily understand the fascinating and irresistible hold it takes upon the unfortunate wretch who has once too often put himself within its power. The relief from violent agony—the first effect—was certainly enough to make me feel quite happy; but when the dreamy sense of hitherto unknown felicity came over my soul, I felt that I would not exchange that vague vision for the brightest reality I had ever experienced.

By morning, however, the effects had passed away and I was well again, with the exception, perhaps, of a slight degree of languor. Again we divided into two parties;

and as I was still weak, I joined the boatmen. We discovered a small sand-island absolutely covered with eggs, while clouds of birds, roused by our presence, were screaming overhead. There were the swift-winged Ferns, with their white bodies, gray backs, and black heads; the gulls of varied hues and tints, and all sizes; and the Black-skimmer or Razor-bill, with his singular mandibles. Of some of these birds with which I was less acquainted I procured specimens. Such a sight I had never witnessed; their numbers darkened the air, their screams were incessant and almost deafening, for they would not leave the island, but kept floating overhead, in great distress at the destruction of their eggs.

These were promiscuously distributed over the whole island, which was not over one hundred yards in diameter, and producing only a few scattering blades of wiry grass in the centre. The eggs were of all sizes, from that of the domestic duck to that of a pigeon, and were all mixed together without regard to kind, and so thickly spread upon the sand, that without great care you could not walk over the ground without breaking them. Some were examined; they were found to be in every stage of maturity. We went to work to clear off a space some forty or fifty feet square, and then took leave of the gulls with a promise to call on the morrow for our eggs, fresh laid. Of several white sharks that came near our boat we managed to run one into shoal water; here many shots were fired into him, which so reduced his speed that the bow of the boat was run upon him, and an axe driven into his head by one of the crew. Whether this put an end to the monster or not, I cannot say, for when he was struck, his floundering in the shoal water stirred up the sand so as to render him invisible; and whether he sunk dead upon the bottom, or slid away, it was impossible to tell, for, although we hunted the space around, we saw no more of him.

This day we had a very pleasant sail along the coast without adventure, but with much success as sportsmen.

During the early part of the night I was stung by a scorpion, who had made his way into my bed. It seems that he had ensconced himself between the folds of my shirt, just below the collar, and as I turned over, I presume, rather oppressed the gentleman, and he thrust his sting into my neck below the left ear. I sprang out of bed, and as I reached the fire the miscreant fell from my neck upon the mat in front of it, and I dispatched him. In a few minutes the wound swelled to a hard, distinctly-defined lump, as large as a hen's egg. Having knocked up the Doctor, he made an application of hot vinegar, from which, in the course of an hour or two, I obtained some relief; but, until near day-dawn, "gentle sleep" did not deign to descend upon me; indeed it was three days before the lump upon my neck was reduced, and my remembrance of my nocturnal visitor was altogether obliterated.

In the morning, after breakfast, we returned to the gull island, and gathered at least four or five bushels of fresh eggs from the ground we had cleared the day before. I candidly confess I should not have credited the thing, had I not been present. On these we all feasted, boats' crews as well as officers, while we remained on Millet Key, and, I believe, some were carried home. These eggs are rich and at the same time very delicate; and I can assure you, they make delicious egg-nog, without the adjunct of milk or cream. But you are probably aware that gulls' eggs always command a high price in the markets where they are met with.

To-day a deer was killed on the island near our camp, and a mess of redfish were caught.

On the following morning it was decided to drive the Millet Key again for deer. There are rattlesnakes on this island, and it is not without risk that a man makes his way through the hummock with the dogs. We therefore decided not to impose this duty altogether upon our men, but to share with them the dangers as well as the amusements of the sport. I accordingly took the dogs to-day, and bolted into the thicket. There were several miles of similar ground, here and there varied by an opening, and I had travelled about two miles when I came to one of these clear spaces, some twenty yards across, without starting a deer. I had become wearied and listless, and was lounging along with my eyes carelessly cast upon the ground, when suddenly they encountered the form of a rattlesnake closely coiled up precisely where the next step would have placed my foot. Of course I came to a sudden halt. The snake did not spring his rattle, but he raised his head and his rattles at the same moment, and fixed his bright, cold eyes upon mine with an intensity that penetrated through my head and chilled the nervous centre in my back-bone.

Never did I behold anything so bright, and at the same time so cold, as those eyes when fixed in anger upon mine. For a moment I gazed in absolute wonder at the reptile, then, making one step backward, I raised my gun and blew that head, eyes, and all to atoms. Intending to take the rattles as a trophy, I drew my hunting-knife and straightened out the snake. He was about four feet, and had twelve rattles. As he lay upon the ground stretched at full length, I placed the point of my knife at the point of junction of the rattles with the body, and by a sudden pressure severed them from the vertebræ. An instantaneous contraction of the muscles followed, which brought the head of the snake with some force against the back of my hand between the thumb and forefinger. That part of my hand was covered with blood, and I felt that the chances were about equal that one of the poison-bearing fangs had entered it. The idea was not an agreeable one, I assure you; but seizing the skirt of my plaid hunting-frock with the left hand, I wiped the blood clean from the right, and examining it closely, was greatly relieved to find that the skin was whole. I then pocketed my trophy, and proceeded on the drive. In a little while a fine buck and two does jumped up before me. I made a snap-shot and brought down the buck as the does disappeared in the thicket. The dogs pushed them so closely that they soon broke cover, and both were secured by the outside party. We then returned with the three deer. A week was very pleasantly passed much in this way, one day differing but little from another; and all returned safely to the Barracks. Adieu.

FORT BROOKE, Tampa, July, 1830.

MY DEAR FATHER:— A few days since, one of those tornadoes or terrible hurricanes so common in tropical regions, and indeed sometimes within the temperate zone, passed by our garrison, or rather I might say *grazed* it! as the man said of Chimborazo, when he passed within forty miles of that noted peak, in his travels in Mexico. But in truth, I may say of this wild uproar of the winds:

> "While oft in whirls the mad tornado flies,
> Mingling the ravaged landscape with the skies."

had its path, which was from east to west, lain one hundred and fifty yards further south, it would probably have prostrated the greater part of the buildings we have toiled more than a year to erect. The only damage, however, sustained, was the carrying away of the north-east corner of the Hospital piazza and the south-west corner of the piazza around the Surgeon's quarters. The latter is about fifty yards from the former in a diagonal line, but measuring perpendicularly across the path of the hurricane, not more than thirty. Therefore, as the whole body of the storm passed between these two buildings, not moving a shingle or the bough of a tree on either side, the circle of rotated movement of the whirlwind could not have been more than five-and-thirty feet.

It occurred about four o'clock, on a previously still and warm afternoon. I was sitting on my piazza enjoying a good cigar, when a strange noise from the eastward startled the air; it was a roaring sound something so uncommon that I sprang from the piazza and ran to the right of the soldiers' Barracks, where I had an open view in the direction from which the storm came. I reached this ground just in time to see the tornado, a dark column, almost an embodiment of atmosphere, break out of the edge of the pine woods about a mile distant, the intervening space being an open plain. I could at that distance see the tall pines whirled from their roots like straws. The dark, I might almost say tangible column of dense atmosphere passed within forty yards of where I stood, yet the air around me was scarcely perceptibly agitated or disturbed. Its passage between the hospital and the Doctor's quarters, an open space, seemed to me at the time as providential.

The next day I rode out to the pine woods through which the hurricane had come; not a tree within its path was standing. It was as narrow as it had been in passing us, but the trees were lying in every direction, on top of each other, in the most inextricable entanglement, showing clearly the rotary as well as the onward motion of the wind. I could not trace the course of the storm by the uprooted trees more than half a mile; whether it originated there or not, I could not tell. Beyond, the forest was undisturbed.

Such sudden and tremendous commotions in the atmosphere are of course necessary to cleanse it from the impurities that arise from marshes and swamps, where the decomposition of great masses of vegetable matter generates the poisons that produce disease; but they are fearful to behold.

> "Why were the winds
> Let slip with such a warrant to destroy?"

Neither lightning nor rain accompanied this storm. While on this subject, I must tell you that I witnessed the formation and dissolution of a water-spout not many days before the tornado came by. I was seated with a book in the *lookout* upon the mound, about noon. The day was *hot*, and I was enjoying the air that came more cool and fresh at this elevation, when my attention was attracted by the gathering of a cloud against the sun. I looked up and perceived a solitary cloud over the bay perhaps half a mile away, from which a funnel-shaped mass of vapor descended and united at its apex with a conical-shaped volume of water that was thrown up in a thin sheet, by a whirlwind which agitated the water at its base. The two cones, the inverted one of vapor, and the erect one of water, together formed the semblance of an hour-glass. The whole object must have been of great magnitude, for I saw everything very distinctly. At the same time, this giant thing was in motion; and what might have seemed a little heterodoxical, had I not frequently observed the winds here, this water-spout was going very nearly down the bay, while the air I was luxuriating in was coming up the bay. The mass seemed to move rapidly and for a time was quite erect, but gradually the top began to lean forward, and in less than five minutes this inclination increased until the equilibrium was lost, and then the water-spout exploded, and as it fell to the water, I could hear the splash and see the foam rise as the gross mass fell upon the face of the bay.

I have now to tell you a sad tale, first prefacing it with the trite old apothegm of Shakespeare.

"For aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth."

A short time ago, one of our officers returning from the Indian Agency stopped for the night at Choko-chatee. He called on an old Indian and his wife, who were frequently at the garrison, and were excellent people. They had one child, a daughter of about sixteen, who was a very pretty girl. Our friend found the old people sitting at their camp-fire in front of their hut, or shed. Near them sat their daughter and her lover, a handsome young brave, who it was understood was shortly to marry the girl. He was stylishly dressed; and decorated as he was with silver head ornaments and war-paint, he was altogether a youth that few maidens would look upon with indifference. The Indian rose to welcome his guest; and after inviting him to be seated by them, the mother called to the daughter and told her to prepare supper for the officer. But she was listening too intently to the glowing language of her lover, to pay immediate attention to the maternal command. After some time, the mother turned again and repeated her injunction in more decided tones. Fain would I absolve the fair maiden from the offence of disregarding her mother's commands, or from any disinclination to wait upon her father's guest. The trial on her feelings at such a moment was a severe one, and still she loitered spell-bound at her warrior's side and drank in his fond converse with a willing ear. Some time after this, the mother rose from her seat and in harsher terms than should have escaped her in chiding a daughter in the presence of her affianced, bade her do as she was ordered. The girl rose and left the party without reply. The poor Indian, in whose untutored mind the idea existed that, when injured by one she loved, the greatest punishment she could inflict upon the offender was self-destruction, had felt herself degraded in the sight of her lover. Her acute sense of wounded pride had made her feel that he could never respect her more; and in an agony of despair she hanged herself upon a young tree with the bead-belt that was wrapped around her head, at a distance of not twenty paces from the fire where her mother sat. As she did not return for some time, the thought flashed across the mind of the young man that something of the kind had happened. He sprang from his seat and darted like lightning into the darkness.

He found his beloved; but it was too late; she was dead. His wail of grief speedily brought the others to his side. Then the wild shriek of the mother, whose heart reproached her with the destruction of her child, (the officer who was present told me,) was beyond description;—it was enough to pierce a heart of stone.

The determined purpose with which the act was committed was wonderful. The little tree had bent with her weight, and she sank upon her knees; then it was only by throwing her body forward with an unflinching will that she had succeeded in strangling herself. All these details I received directly from the officer himself.

There was another instance that had previously occurred at this same town of Choko-chatee, of a different character, but evincing the determined purpose of the Seminole mind. An Indian, named Beaver, had taken a female orphan child some fifteen years ago, and reared it with a parent's solicitude. And now as his reward, he proposed to take his *protegés* to wife. But his hope and expectation of bliss was brief: within a month of the time appointed for the marriage ceremony, a young brave ran off with his betrothed. Before two moons had passed, the youth imprudently brought his stolen treasure back to Choko-chatee. Unluckily for him, Beaver was at home, and immediately made known the fact of his return to the chief, Alligator. The latter immediately assembled his council. The accused was tried, found guilty, and sentenced to have the law enforced upon him. The *law* for this offence is "*to be flogged till senseless, and to lose his ears.*"

Alligator ordered the sentence to be carried into effect at once. The culprit was brought into the council-ring; his body was denuded, and he was laid upon his face in the centre of the space around which the spectators were arranged; three officials then ranged themselves on each side of him armed with stout hickories, and at the signal given by the chief, they rained upon his back such a shower of blows as very soon effected the requirements of the law. Alligator then stepped up, drew from its sheath his scalping-knife, and severed the upper portion of each ear. The youth lay there for some time (without any attention or restoratives being offered by those present) before consciousness returned. As he slowly rose from the ground, Alligator said to him sternly, "There are your ears,—take them." The youth deliberately took them up, and looking round the assembly, walked haughtily up to Beaver, and casting them indignantly at his feet, told him to make "*saufkee*" of them. Then bidding his ill-gotten wife follow him, stalked boldly out of the ring. This incident I had also from an eye-witness.

I should explain that *saufkee*, the article of food which the youth recommended to Beaver as a suitable dish for himself, and to be made of those head-ornaments just thrown at his feet, is made *usually* of Indian corn or maize. The corn is first cracked in a wooden mortar, and then laid in a strong lye made from wood-ashes, where it remains twenty-four hours. It is then boiled, and is a very wholesome and palatable dish. I have often eaten it with a good relish. It is a pleasing sight to see four or six stalwart warriors sitting round a large kettle of hot saufkee, with but one large wooden spoon between them. The chief, if he be of the party, or the oldest man,—for great deference is paid to both rank and age,—takes the spoon, and with a modest and at the same time a studied and graceful motion of the arm, bends forward and takes a spoonful of this favorite viand, which, having disposed of, he then, with the most respectful air, hands the spoon to his neighbor on the left. Thus it goes round till the kettle is emptied. During the meal, the conversation is cheerful and unwearied.

[Soon after the preceding letter was penned, the writer received orders from Washington, detailing him for the recruiting service at the North. He was thus suddenly removed from the scenes of frontier life and personal adventure, which alone in his estimation constituted the charm of a military life in time of peace, and which in truth enabled him, with any degree of contentment, to endure the dull monotony and enervating routine of garrison service. By this order he was carried into the busy world after several years passed in comparative exclusion. He was welcomed into the society of former friends, and allured into the gayeties of a city life. His duties were less irksome than those of a small garrison to which he had been inured. His correspondence was reduced to a brief inquiry after the health and welfare of a relative, or as brief a response to a note of similar import. A year or more passed in this way, ere he was again relieved from detached service of various kinds in the North and East, and ordered to the West, where his soul yearned to resume a much-loved intercourse with nature, and to participate reasonably in the sports of the field; and the following letters will contain accounts of the writer's doings in many and many pleasant and some exciting adventures. His sole object at this time is to collate from a mass of papers running through a period of many years, and embracing Military Reports, Official Communications, and so forth, a series of familiar epistles for publication, and to confine the series to such as delineate scenes wherein either accident, chance, or enterprise had made him a participant. These letters refer simply to the personal adventures of the writer as narrated to intimate friends, and were commonly written on the spot. If perchance, in those already submitted to the reader, he has tired or become weary at the too frequent introduction of the exploits of the writer himself, the latter begs leave to remind him of the warning given him at the threshold, where the author declared, as did "*the Pious Æneas*," that he proposed to narrate adventures, "*all of which he saw and part of which he was.*"

The following letter from Major-General Gaines, commanding the Western Department, appointing the writer a member of his military family, removed him for six years from the line of the Army. At the close of that period, he was promoted to a captaincy in his Regiment, and as the General at that time was required to take his aide-de-camp from the subalterns of the Army, the writer took leave of him with the heartfelt regard and affection for one whose uniform kindness can never be forgotten.]

H. Q. WESTERN DEPARTMENT, JEFFERSON BARRACKS,
Mo., April 2, 1831.

AIDE-DE-CAMP GEORGE A. McCALL,
U. S. Army, Philada.

DEAR SIR:—You will find by my order of yesterday's date that I have announced your appointment of Aide-de-Camp, to act as Assistant Adjutant-General of my command.

I had promised myself the pleasure of announcing your appointment while at Nashville in the last year, but I waited for the acceptance of the resignation of Aide-de-Camp Lowndes; and when I received it, I learned that it was intended by the Department of War to oppose the appointment of an aide-de-camp other than that allowed to a Brigadier. I therefore declined appointing you until advised some days past of the intention of Aide-de-Camp Butler to retire from the Army. . . . . . . Wishing to see you at your Staff Station as soon as your health will permit, I am, with great respect and esteem, your friend EDMUND P. GAINES.

[On receiving the foregoing letter, the writer repaired to Jefferson Barracks, at that time the General's headquarters, and found him on the eve of embarking on the steamer *Cumberland*, for Fort Armstrong, at Rock Island (Illinois), at the mouth of Rock River, some two hundred miles above St. Louis. The boat raised steam the next day and ascended the Mississippi as far as the Des Moines Rapids without interruption. Here, however, she grounded, and the Captain declared he could go no further; but the General went upon the hurricane-deck and read the Captain a little lecture, which induced him to try it again, and to keep trying it, until at last he succeeded, with some rubbing and grinding of the boat's bottom, in getting her over. The General, on arriving at Fort Armstrong, landed and took up his quarters with the commanding officer, Major John Bliss, of the Third Infantry. The aide-de-camp was also offered a room and a seat at the table of the Major. The garrison consisted of two companies of the Third Infantry. From these headquarters the following letters were sent.]

HEADQUARTERS WESTERN DEPARTMENT,
ROCK ISLAND, Ill., June 16, 1831.

MY DEAR FATHER:—Your letter of the 5th inst. reached me this morning, having been forwarded from St. Louis by the steamboat *Winnebago*, bound to Galena. At the time that she had discharged about half her freight for this post (*i. e.* the ordnance stores and subsistence for Major B.'s command), a "*sucker*," as the frontier inhabitants of Missouri term their neighbors of Illinois, arrived express, from the Red Banks, about eighty miles below this, and brought a paper from the crews of two keelboats (laden with merchandise of considerable value), soliciting of the General the protection of an escort or guard for their vessels as far as Rock Island.

It appears from their statement, that, while the boats lay one night at the French-Indian or Indian-French settlement, at the Des Moines Rapids, a party of Indians, avowedly friendly and professing to belong to Keokuk's party, loitered round the fire where the crews were preparing their supper, and with the unconquerable pertinacity peculiar to their race, pushed their inquiries in such a variety of shapes, that they at length gathered from the answers of their less subtle white brethren the information that they were so desirous to obtain; viz.: that the boats contained, among other things, a quantity of red cloth, powder, whisky, &c. &c., intended for the traders who reside among their old enemies the Sioux. As soon as they had satisfied themselves on this point, they begged a bottle or two of whisky from their "*very good friends,*" and retired to their camp to drink it.

As soon as they retired, one of the crew, who had had a good deal of intercourse with Indians for many years, expressed his fears to the others that all was not right. "These men," said he, "are evidently *Sacs;* but so far from believing them to be of Keokuk's party, I shrewdly suspect them of belonging to the '*British band*'" (as the Black-Hawk's party is called). Hereupon it was thought advisable to observe their motions, and the speaker volunteered his services; as soon, therefore, as their meal was finished, and they supposed the "*fire-water*" began to do its office, the sucker (for it was the same to whom I have already given the appellation common to the natives of Illinois) departed for the purpose of reconnoitring the supposed hostile camp.

He found the Indians already under the influence of the liquor they had drunk, and cautiously approaching their fire, the first words that saluted his ear (for he understood the language well) convinced him that his first impression with regard to their character, was but too well-founded.

The party consisted of four, one of whom, a brave of some distinction, was addressing the others to this effect: "My brothers," said he, "the braves of the pale-faces are at this moment surrounding our homes; their watch-fires illuminate the forests of our ancestors; their great guns are pointed, their long knives are bared, and they only wait for the arrival of their horsemen, to drive us from the homes, the fair fields, and the graves of our forefathers." He paused, and a long, shrill, and melancholy war-whoop from his companions was the reply.— "These boats of the pale-faces," he continued, "are going to our old enemies the Sioux, who fourteen moons past, under the pretence of offering the *pipe of friendship* to our tribe, faithlessly attacked our unarmed chief, and immolated him with all his family! — Answer me, my brothers! Shall the treasures of the pale-faces reach their destination?" — A fierce and shrilling shout was the only answer to this question, but it too plainly indicated to the sucker the savage eagerness of the Indian and his friends to seize upon their prey, to require interpretation. The plan was soon arranged by the Indians. One of the party was to set out in the morning, to get a reinforcement, while the others were to hover about the boats as they slowly toiled against the current of the Mississippi, and observe their motion until they reached a certain point (about forty miles below this), where a strong party of the Black-Hawk band was to await their coming, and where, surprising the unsuspecting crews in the night, their rich cargoes should fall an easy prey to the victors. This being settled, the leader raised the bottle from the ground, and scanning its contents with an eagle eye as he held it to the firelight, carried it to his mouth. The scout did not wait to see the flask make its round, but hurried to his friends with an account of what he had overheard. Some of the party were in favor of proceeding at once and making the best of their time; others were for returning; but the scout assured them they were in no danger at present, and had nothing to fear before they reached the point designated by the Indians, unless they should awaken their suspicions by a precipitous movement, at the same time advising them to pursue their course as if nothing had happened, until they reached the Red Bank, where there is a considerable settlement, and where they might remain in safety until a convoy could be procured from Rock Island, which he volunteered to go from that place in quest of. His advice was followed; and here he is having just put me in possession of the facts nearly as I have given them to you.

As these boats have on board some ammunition essential to the perfect efficiency of the troops, the General has engaged the captain of the *Winnebago* to return for them. A company will be put on board, and the General will avail himself of the opportunity to examine more closely the country about the mouth of Rock River, by the "*Great cut-off.*"

We shall go on board as soon as the steamboat has discharged its freight, which I think will be about midnight; and if I can find time to-morrow, I will give you a sketch of our history since we left St. Louis.

Hd. Qrs Western Department. On board Steamer Winnebago.
Near the Red Banks, June 17, 1831.

My dear Father: — About midnight we got on board, and soon after were under a press of steam moving down the bright current of the father of waters; the moon was at the full and the night beautiful; the mild prairies on our right smiling in the soft moonlight, were finely contrasted with the dark and frowning woodland that overhung and shaded the water on our left. The air was redolent with the rich offering of a thousand prairie-flowers, and love and poetry as they accepted the offering pronounced the hour to be their own.

The boat was filled with passengers for Galena, among whom were (and are, for they are still with us) four ladies. The berths were all filled, so that I had full time to contemplate the scene alone upon the hurricane-deck.

Having been at work all day, I at length lay down in my cloak and slept for an hour; but was again up at four o'clock preparing a dispatch for the Governor of Illinois —which we sent off about breakfast-time. I also sent a letter addressed to yourself, which I trust will reach its destination.

Now for Indian affairs. The day after our arrival at Fort Armstrong, Black-Hawk, with his principal braves, met the General in council. They approached the council-house, bounding from the earth and whooping, in all the extravagance of the war-dance. We observed too that they were much more completely armed than is usual on such occasions; and many of them, indeed, had their bows bent, so unequivocal an indication of their hostile feeling, that it was thought proper privately to increase the guard and keep the whole command under arms, for which purpose the usual drill afforded a sufficient pretext. And I observed during the session of the council, some of the old traders were evidently uneasy and constantly on the *qui vive*, and they afterwards told me that never before at a similar scene did they see so strong a demonstration of hostility as on this occasion.

The General opened the business by telling the Sacs, who were seated on the left of the friendly party of Foxes, under Keokuk, that he had called their chiefs and braves together for the purpose of conferring with them on the subject of the outrages that had been committed by a part of the tribe, in the vicinity of Rock Island, during the past spring, and he desired to have a candid and a true talk. He called to their minds, the articles of the treaty entered into between the United States, themselves, and the Foxes, twenty-seven years ago, which was renewed sixteen years ago, and again six years since, when they finally relinquished to the Government of the United States *all their lands east of the Mississippi River*.

He also reminded them that, although they were professedly *the British band*, and had never been well-disposed towards us, still their great father, the President, had permitted them to remain, year after year, and cultivate the land they had sold, and from which they had not been removed, merely because the frontier was still thinly populated, and there was no immediate call for the land; and told them their failing to fulfil the terms of the treaty had been ascribed to their ignorance of the propriety of their immediate removal, rather than to any disposition to quibble or prevaricate, or, on a future day, to deny the sale of the land; but that, since the country had begun to be settled, difficulties were constantly occurring between the white inhabitants and themselves, and their great father was now convinced of the impossibility of continuing on friendly terms while they remained on this side the river. That the laws of his country and his oath of office required the President of the United States to see justice done to all parties, and that the numerous complaints of the whites called on him to require of the Sacs a fulfilment of the terms of the treaty. It was therefore necessary that they should without delay cross the Mississippi; that they would there find a rich and beautiful country abounding in game, in which they might subsist without labor, and where they might reside peacefully and undisturbed.

"*The Jumping Fish*" (the hereditary chieftain) replied: "My braves have heard what you have said, but they know not what sales or bargains you speak of; yet, if the Great Spirit is with your people, I do not think they would intentionally write down falsehoods at a council, while their red brethren speak what comes from the heart.

"Some time ago I sold a part of our land to obtain the release of a captive brave, but neither I, nor my braves, know of any sale of *all* our lands east of the Mississippi River. I am a red-skin and do not use paper at a talk, but what is said is impressed on my heart, and I do not forget it."

After a part of the first treaty had been read to them and the chiefs who had signed it named, &c., &c., and some other remarks had been made, the Black-Hawk rose and said,—

"Our braves are unanimous in their desire to remain in their old fields; they wish to harvest their corn and will do so peaceably; they have no evil at heart; but the Great Spirit having given the land to their forefathers as a home, they are unwilling to leave it."

The General told him his great chief had sold the land, and they no longer had a right to occupy it, and that go they *must*. "Who is the Black-Hawk that he should assume the right of dictating to his tribe?" said the General. "I know him not—he is no chief;—who is he? that he should take upon himself to speak for his tribe?" The old *Hawk*, who is upwards of seventy, was very much cut down by this, and took his seat quite mortified; but after a little he rose and, with infinite dignity and energy of manner addressing the General, said,—

"You have asked who is the Black-Hawk? Know that I am a Sac. My fathers were great men; they have left their bones in our fields, and there I will remain and leave my bones with theirs."

The General told them to think of it till morning, and after they had slept on it to let him know their decision.

They were then dismissed, and they retired with the same surly defiance depicted in their countenances, which had been remarkable in their demeanor throughout the morning

Early the next morning Keokuk with the friendly party called on the General. He said, "that he had listened with deep interest, to the talk of the day before; that he had been with the Sacs all night endeavoring to induce his personal friends to withdraw from the British band; and that he had succeeded in gaining twelve large lodges (near fifty families); and he wished the General would abstain from the use of force until he got all his relatives and friends across the Mississippi, for he was resolved 'to pull at them until he got over all that would come.'"

He appeared to feel acutely for the Black-Hawk's party, and said they had planted corn on the Rock River lands; and as it was now too late in the season to prepare new fields, they must suffer if they were deprived of their harvest. Keokuk is a perfect Apollo in figure, and is one of the most graceful and eloquent speakers I have seen among the Indians of any tribe. The General approved his conduct, and highly commended him, and told him he should have time to continue his exertions, and that those who moved should be furnished with as much corn as they could have raised; but that go they must in a very few days. His party then returned to the camp opposite the fort, where they had hoisted a large white flag.

Two days afterwards, the Black-Hawk again appeared, and was on this occasion accompanied by several of the women of his tribe,—a circumstance of rare occurrence on occasions like the present. He commenced by saying,—

"The Great Spirit made all men, the Red and the White: the Great Spirit placed my people where they now live. Our women have worked the fields till they have become easy of culture, and they have come to tell you they will not leave them. Know then, that they have decided *not to move*. The Great Spirit," he continued, "never directed that these lands should be sold; and if any chief sold them, he did that which was not sanctioned by his people."

An ill-looking woman now rose, and said she was the daughter of the old chief, who, it was said, had sold the lands, and that she knew no sale had been made, etc.

The General told them they had frequently been reminded of the treaty which was public, and that it was now unnecessary to say anything further on the subject; that the time had come when it was necessary to act; that he would give them three days to move, and that, if they did not move in that time, they would be driven across the river.

They then departed.

In these talks I have given you substantially what was said, though without particular reference to my Notes which I took for the War Department.

During the interval between the first talk and the last, the agent for the Fox Indians, a man of some influence, and personally acquainted with the principal men of the British Band, had visited their village twice, and used every argument to persuade them to move voluntarily, but without success. They always denied any knowledge of the sale of the land in question, and very decidedly expressed their determination to remain inhabitants of their present town, and cultivate their old fields, and lay their bones in them.

The General is of course desirous to remove them, if possible, without bloodshed, and on that account gave them three days to effect the movement, in hopes that in the interim they would see the folly of their decision.

They say that they wish to be at peace; that they will not fight if attacked; but that they are as firmly resolved to remain and lay their bones beside those of their ancestors.

This is of course *Indian talk.* The Sacs are perhaps the most warlike, and the fiercest as well as most determined Indians in our country, as their conduct during the last war exemplified. Some of them were killed at the very cannon's mouth; and if they could now raise sufficient force to make a successful stand, and take a number of scalps before they cross the river, (which they well enough know they *must* do,) they would delight in seizing any opportunity that would afford them revenge; — but they are fortunately so well acquainted with what would be the consequence to themselves to think of such a thing for one moment, and their only object, I am of opinion, is to extort further annuities or presents from the Government.

The General has called for me on the hurricane-deck to take notes of the country, and make a topographical sketch of this "slough." Adieu.

HD. QRS. WESTERN DEPARTMENT. On board the WINNEBAGO.
June 19, 1831.

MY DEAR FATHER: — For two days I have been on the hurricane-deck of the boat, many hours at a time, taking *notes* and sketches of the country east of the "slough," which we have been navigating ever since our return from the "Red Bank," with the two keel-boats before mentioned, which were placed in safety under the guns of the fort.

As we put the crew of the boat and the passengers under the semblance of martial law, three of the four ladies, soon tired of the noise of the new-made soldiers, and took refuge in the fort with the more orderly regulars; but the fourth, Mrs. S——, a fine-looking young woman, the daughter of Judge D——, of Arkansas, was too much of the heroine to desert her post; and remained, as she told me, to see that her better half did his duty towards his country. This better half, however, is far from being a moiety of "the one flesh": he is near double her age, a sot, and never leaves the card-table till he is carried by the waiter to bed. She is pretty, as I told you, and being full of life, I discourse with her by the hour when I am not on deck; and as the General and I have now half of the ladies' cabin, I of course see her frequently.

We shall continue to cruise in these waters, observing the motions of the red-skins, till the arrival of the Governor with some hundreds of mounted militia; he is expected on the 21st instant.

As the Black-Hawk declined to move, and we learned from good authority they would be joined by the Prophet's band of Winnebagos and Kickapoos, to the amount of some hundreds,—I know not how many, for they of course lie *perdu*, and no man can calculate the strength of an Indian war-party till he sees them in the field,—at least under the present circumstances. This, as I observed, being the case, the General determined not to strike a blow until he could array such a force as would make resistance hopeless; for though it would be easy enough to drive them from their present position across the river, yet without a large body of mounted men it would be impossible to protect this extensive frontier settlement from their ravages, in case they should recross either above or below for the purpose of revenge. I counted, the other day, a hundred and twenty canoes in front of the friendly town, in one mass, besides numbers in every direction,—at least half of which probably belong to the British band and their allies,—numbers of whom, I have no doubt, have sought the sanctuary of the white flag, under which they will lie at their ease until they see how the scale turns; for the "*friendly*" party (so called) is, I believe, at *most* but *neutral*.

But I have no doubt that when a sufficient force is brought to bear upon them, they will still without hesitation sign the articles of agreement, and quietly relinquish their lands.

June 23.

Here we have been threading this slough twice a day for a week, and no Governor arrived yet. The high state of the waters which cross his line of march have doubtless been a greater obstacle to the celerity of his Excellency's movements, than any he had anticipated would be opposed to him. I am wearied with the sameness of the scene, for as he has been expected daily and almost hourly for some days past, we have visited the point of concentration regularly with a supply of ammunition and provision, both of which he stands in need of. We have examined Rock River as high up as the town, and found the channel good; the town is prettily situated and has some fine land adjacent to it, all of which is finely commanded by some heights upon its left. As we passed the town we observed a number of horses picketed and at large, but saw no inhabitants but a few old women and children. The ravines in rear of the town, which are both long and numerous, and moreover thickly clad with underbrush, would afford a covering for an immense number of Indian warriors, but still could be swept in a few minutes by some pieces of artillery on the heights above mentioned. Our lady still remains with us, nothing daunted by the warlike preparations she sees around her; but she has too much sense and has seen too much of the Indian character in her own country to be alarmed at outward appearances. I collect her bouquets of prairie-flowers daily, and we discuss their beauties with great apparent interest; indeed the colors and delicacy of some of these are truly exquisite, though they have little fragrance. The weather for some days has been charming, and nothing can be more brilliant than the nights. We sleep under the guns of the Fort; and the other night, returning later than usual, we discovered at some distance a canoe apparently floating with the stream; but suspecting that it contained some red-skins, the General ordered the pilot to steer for it: the steamboat accordingly changed her course and began to plough the waves in the direction of the object, which, gliding along in the shade of the woody bank, would, to an inexperienced eye, have passed for one of the numerous pieces of floating timber which are at this season borne seaward on the bosom of the mighty Mississippi. It was as we had anticipated; but the courage of the midnight wanderers was constant and true to their purpose: they lay perfectly concealed in their shell of a boat until another revolution or two of the wheels of the *Winnebago* would have brought her upon them, and buried them and their canoe in the turmoil of waters that burst and parted beneath her angry prow; but then, as it were by magic, five forms simultaneously appeared above the low sides of the hollow trunk, and one simultaneous sweep of five light paddles darted the canoe like an arrow to the shore, where, leaving it to the guidance of the current, they sprung on land and instantly disappeared in the thicket. As we were running close to the shore and parallel to it, we passed within a few yards of them as they vanished from our sight, but as the object was not to injure them (which from their boldness they were probably aware of), they were permitted to escape unhurt.

July 1.

On the 29th ultimo the Governor arrived with fifteen hundred mounted men, under command of General Duncan; and took up his quarters with us on board the *Winnebago.* Having accompanied the militia of his State, merely with a view of inspiring them by his presence and participation in the toils and privations of the campaign with a portion of his own patriotic feelings, the Governor took no active command; but rumor, ever busy with the actions of the *Great*, imputed his military ardor to no other incitive than the promised advancement of his own politic views. On the evening of the 28th, an advanced company of the *Spies* (a regiment, under that title, commanded by Brig. Gen. Whitesides) reached the bluff, where the militia were ordered to unite with us, and notified the General of the approach of the command. They had encamped about ten miles to the south-east of our position, and the next morning soon after sunrise we discovered the heads of their columns upon the summit of a distant hill, which rose gradually and regularly from the river-bank. Of this part of the country, which is beautiful, rolling prairie, the upper or, as it is called, hurricane-deck of the *Winnebago* commanded a perfect view; and as they advanced in four columns directly in front of us, and marched slowly down the sloping plain, I thought I looked upon one of the prettiest pictures of the kind ever presented to my view. The General directed me to meet them and invite the Governor, with Gen. Duncan and his staff, to breakfast with us on board. On reaching the head of the left centre column, which had now halted on a spacious level, I inquired for the Commander-in-Chief, and was informed I should find him about the centre of that column; and having proceeded thither, I soon discovered a small knot of better than ordinarily mounted men, whom I rightly conjectured to be the persons I sought.

Having welcomed the General in the name of General Gaines, I inquired for the Governor, and was conducted by General Duncan towards a vehicle, which, had I met it elsewhere, I should have taken for a Jersey fish-cart; but which, from its situation and position in the column, I now set down in my mind for an ammunition caisson. Approaching it, however, the General raised a leather curtain, — for with these sable barriers was the stronghold defended on all sides against the weather, — and there, *Jupiter tonans!* there lay his linsey-woolsey Excellency, coiled upon a truss of tarnished straw. By preventing an apoplexy of admiration, with which I was at that moment attacked, from gaining vent in an uncourtly cachinnation, I had like to have died; but I bowed me to the earth in token of respect, and in so doing recovered sufficiently to deliver my message. The invitation was declined, because, as his Excellency said, he had had for three days "the chills and fever." I persuaded him, however, on that account to take a state-room on board the boat, as he would then be able to contend with his malady on a fairer footing, and finally prevailed upon him to do so.

As we had a pretty substantial breakfast, I had the satisfaction of seeing our guests, who had been on plain allowance for some time, do ample justice to our steamboat fare; but this is a subject I will not descant upon, as I am myself, especially after being on horseback an hour or two before day, apt enough to be seduced, by the alluring savor of beefsteaks and collops, far beyond the pale of classic epicurism.

The whole day was absolutely necessary for the issuing of ammunition, the cleaning of arms, and finally putting the men in effective fighting order after the fatigues of the march. But the next morning's sun, which rose lurid and threatening, saw our columns on the march towards the Sac village. The United States Infantry of the 1st and 6th Regiments debouched from Fort Armstrong, and crossing the narrow channel to the mainland, moved down upon the village, which is about four miles from the fort, in two columns, supported by one company of artillery; while the mounted men under General Duncan advanced in the opposite direction. As the latter were obliged to ford Rock River immediately above the village, the *Winnebago*, with one company of artillery on board, proceeded up the river to cover their passage. The companies arrived simultaneously at the designated points, and the artillery having taken possession of the heights on the right of the village, a few shots were fired through the ravines and the brushwood on the island, over which the trace to the ford passed, and the head of the column of militia entered the river. Some troops of the spies having effected their passage, the General landed, and having thrown out some light infantry, mounted and began to reconnoitre more minutely than he had hitherto done the ground about the village. I knew that the position of the Indians was a strong one, but I now saw that it was much more tenable than I had even imagined; and had they been disposed to maintain it, it would have given us some trouble to dislodge them; but they had, as soon as they saw their fate was inevitable, and that they were, poor fellows, doomed to quit forever their much loved homes, wisely decided to abandon their village. This, however, was not concluded until they saw from our preparations that they could trifle no longer with impunity. They had remained in their village until just before day on the morning of our entrance; when, collecting their canoes, a greater part of them crossed to the western shore of the Mississippi; and some indeed had clung to their miserable dwellings until within a short time of our arrival, as we discovered by the fresh tracks on the trace leading to the Winnebago Prophet's town some distance up the river.

Of course they were not pursued, — as the object now, that they were driven from their old haunts, and saw that we had a sufficient mounted force to protect the frontier, was to let them quietly settle on the lands appropriated to them, and then call the chiefs to a council for the purpose of renewing the treaty, and securing their pledges to preserve order and quiet among their followers.

Soon after our arrival on the ground, it commenced raining, and poured in torrents till nightfall.

I am called off and must close my letter. Adieu.

HD. QRS. WESTERN DEPARTMENT. On board the Steamer WINNEBAGO.
July 5, 1831.

MY DEAR FATHER: — Keokuk, who has talent with great shrewdness, and is withal an eloquent speaker, has been unremitting in his efforts to move the hearts of the people of the British or Black-Hawk band to yield gracefully, or at least appear to acquiesce in what must at last prove to be inevitable. In truth, the difficulty has been in bringing about, not a conviction that their country was inevitably wrested from them, (for that was apparent to the most obtuse,) but to overcome a determination to die rather than relinquish the land of their birth and the graves of their ancestors. Keokuk accomplished the latter point, — the former required no prompting.

The artful negotiator called on the General two days ago in all the finery of official dress, conspicuous in which was a necklace of the formidable claws of the Grizzly Bear, (which, by the by, it is whispered he procured with "*the silver bullet;*" but Keokuk is nevertheless acknowledged to be a brave and able leader on the war-path, as well as a wise man in council;) and in a grandiloquent speech reported the success of his mission; and that Black-Hawk would come in the next day and renew the treaty, relinquishing the territory latterly in dispute.

At the appointed time, Black-Hawk appeared, accompanied by "*The Jumping Fish*," the legitimate chief, who was by hereditary right, so far as that was acknowledged, and for the rest by election, the head and front of the Band; but whose negative character gave way before the bold and active promptings of his prime minister, Black-Hawk. There were in attendance about fifty sub-chiefs and distinguished warriors, but all on this occasion were unarmed.

All being seated in due form, the treaty, which in the interval I had been ordered to draw up, I, by direction of the General, now read sentence after sentence, as it was translated by the interpreter, Saint Clare, a half-blood French Indian. This being accomplished, and the purport of the treaty being acknowledged as understood and agreed to by *The Jumping Fish*, I called up Black-Hawk to affix, in his official character as prime minister, his sign-manual to the paper. He arose slowly, and with great dignity, while in the expression of his fine face there was a deep-seated grief and humiliation that no one could witness unmoved. The sound of his heel upon the floor as he strode majestically forward was measured and distinct. When he reached the table where I sat, I handed him a pen, and pointed to the place where he was to affix the mark that would sunder the tie he held most dear on earth. He took the pen—made a large, bold cross with a force which rendered *that* pen forever unfit for further use; then returning it politely, he turned short upon his heel, and resumed his seat in the manner he had left it. It was an imposing ceremony, and scarcely a breath was drawn by any one present during its passage. Thus ended the scene—

one of the most impressive of the kind I ever looked upon. And with it terminated the duty which had led General Gaines to visit Fort Armstrong. I must not omit to mention that during our stay here the General had our horses put on board a boat, in which we crossed the river; — we ascended a steep bluff, and on attaining its summit, there was laid open to our view a boundless, rolling prairie, the first I had ever laid eyes upon. We rode out upon it some distance. I was greatly exhilarated, and proposed to the General to breathe our horses; to this he responded by putting spurs to his charger, and bounded off like a boy. I at once discovered that the old gentleman was a fine horseman and a bold rider. After a pleasant ride we returned, — both, I believe, much refreshed and benefited after being shut up on the steamer.

It is late at night, and I must close my letter. Adieu.

JEFFERSON BARRACKS, July 12, 1831.

MY DEAR FATHER: — When the Black-Hawk campaign had terminated, the General returned to his head-quarters; and after a short detention here, set out, accompanied by his Acting Aide-de-Camp M. L. Clark, on a tour of inspection to the military posts in Louisiana.

I have nothing of interest from him to offer you. In haste.

[The following was indorsed on the corner of a package of letters written by the General to General Atkinson and other commanders, on the subject of the obligations of the Government in its relations to the Indian tribes on our frontier, dated New Orleans, August 10, 1831.]

To Aide-de-Camp MCCALL, *Jefferson Barracks*: —

Mr. McCall will read and retain copies of the enclosed, and then seal and send them to General Atkinson. Mr.

McCall's letters have been more than satisfactory, and they have merited a much better response than I have hitherto been able to give them. His friend,

E. P. GAINES.

JEFFERSON BARRACKS, August 14, 1831

DEAR GENERAL:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant, (which reached me last evening,) and to inform you that the commands with which you favored me have been executed.

Since my letter of the 9th, relative to the recent movement of the Sacs and Foxes, a sub-agent has arrived from the scene of the massacre perpetrated upon the unfortunate Menomonies, and has brought more particular accounts of the deed, the details of which are calculated to excite the extremest loathsomeness. They will be found in the papers accompanying General Atkinson's letter, which I enclose herewith.

The General and his family start for the Springs in the morning, where they purpose passing some days, and where I shall endeavor to join them the day after tomorrow.

JEFFERSON BARRACKS, August 18, 1831.

DEAR GENERAL:—By this day's mail I received a letter from Colonel Morgan, 1st Infantry, requesting, &c., &c.; as I do not feel authorized to act in this case without instructions, I must beg the favor of your views on the subject, that I may act in accordance with your wishes.

Much to my surprise, the mail of the 16th instant brought to my hands the package of letters which was dispatched per Colonel Strode, (the aide of Governor R.,) while we lay at the Yellow Banks, Mo., in June last. The package was destined to Lieutenant Clark, (who at the time was in this office,) and contained your letter of the 17th of June to the Adjutant-General, enclosing the memoranda of the "*talks*" with the Sac and Fox Indians, with other papers relating thereto.

I have forwarded them to the Adjutant-General's office with the necessary remarks; but I am unable to account for the delay, or to say to whom reprehension is due for their detention. Among other papers was the letter which was handed to you to be forwarded to Mrs. D., of W., Missouri. I have sent it to Colonel C., whom you requested to deliver it, as it contained money; I shall not feel satisfied till I hear that it has been received.

Herewith I have the honor to enclose a list or roll of the officers stationed at the several posts south of the Arkansas, as requested. Also, &c., &c., &c.

Jefferson Barracks, August 28, 1831.

Dear General:—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your instructions dated the 12th inst., which have been complied with. I enclose herewith copies of "Special Orders," Nos. 55, 56, and 57, which I have this day issued. I have called for reports of expenses incurred in the course of the late movements of the United States troops and militia on the Illinois frontier, by the Quartermaster's, Ordnance, and Subsistence Departments, which I will forward so soon as they are received from the several officers in charge of those departments.

It is with feelings of the deepest sorrow that I take upon myself the task of imparting to you the particulars of the meeting which took place on the 26th inst., between your friend, Major Biddle, and Mr. Pettis, which, it is greatly to be feared, will prove fatal to the former, as it has already to the latter gentleman.

Major Biddle was attended on the ground by General Ashley and Major O'Fallen, besides his medical friends.

The parties exchanged shots at the distance of five feet, when they both fell, Major Biddle dangerously wounded, and his adversary mortally. The Major received the ball of the other just above the hip, where it is supposed to have lodged, but has as yet baffled the skill of his surgeon to find it. During the first night his life was thought to be in much danger, but last evening the surgeon expressed hopes that a favorable change was about to take place; and a man who has just returned from the city brings accounts which lead to the belief that their opinion was not unfounded.

I trust in another day I shall be able to give you still more favorable accounts. I am, General, &c.

Asst. Adjt.-General's Office, West. Dept.
Jefferson Barracks, August 29, 1831.

Dear General:—Captain Pike of the Rock Island Volunteers has this moment arrived by express from Fort Armstrong, bringing letters from Captain Loomis, commanding Fort Crawford, and the Indian Agent at Prairie du Chien, stating that a war-party of Sac Indians, accompanied by some of their allies, the Foxes, on the 30th ult., surprised an encampment of Menomonies, within a few hundred yards of old Fort Crawford, and having killed twenty-five of their number, succeeded in regaining their canoes before the alarm was given, and descended the river unmolested. The particulars of this outrage will be fully developed to you by the enclosed letters.

I have communicated the intelligence to General Atkinson, who informs me that he has also received from Captain Loomis a report of the "affair," but says that he does not feel authorized to order any movement of troops to that quarter without express instructions from the Department.

Colonel Morgan has not yet returned from Louisville, and until Major Bliss reaches Fort Armstrong, (whither he proceeds to-morrow,) there will be no field-officer with the 1st Infantry. The express informs me that the morning he left Fort Armstrong, one of Keokuk's band reported to the commanding officer, that a party of Winnebagoes, under the "Prophet," had joined the Sacs, with the purpose of proceeding against the Menomonies, but implicit confidence is not to be placed in the report.

I have nothing further to offer you worthy of your attention, but I will immediately inform you of anything that reaches me by whatever channel, of the movements of the Indians, or the settlers on the upper Mississippi.

Pray accept for yourself, General, and for your family the best wishes of Yours, &c.

G. A. McC.

To Major-General E. P. Gaines, *commanding*
West. Depart. U. S. Army, Jackson, Miss.

Jeff. Barracks, August 30, 1831.

Dear General:—I trust you will impute to me so warm an interest in all that concerns you, as to believe that the account (for which I must thank you) of your safe arrival at Nashville afforded me much pleasure, which was enhanced by the knowledge that you found your friends all well. Since my letter of the 9th inst., nothing further has been received from Fort Crawford.

I have the honor to transmit herewith sundry communications which have reached me within the last three days, concerning which I would beg leave to request your instructions.

Owing to a press of business at one time and unseasonable weather at another, I have not been able to visit the Sulphur Springs as you recommended; but I shall take an early opportunity of doing so, when I shall have it in my power to give you some information respecting the character of the waters and their beneficial effects.

I am, General, &c.

HEADQUARTERS WESTERN DEPARTMENT.
NASHVILLE, Tenn., Sept 6, 1831.

MY DEAR McCALL: — Your letters of the 26th ult., with their enclosures, are received and your measures approved.

The receipt given by Brigade Quartermaster Thomas to Major Bliss, for ordnance stores, and to which I have subjoined my approval, is returned herewith.

I very much regret that any misunderstanding should have taken place between Colonel Morgan and myself on the subject of my order of the 3d of last month, pardoning offenders of his regiment, as I am satisfied of the correctness of his habits and memory, and have great respect for his opinions. But I certainly understood him as having sustained me in the views embraced in my order upon that occasion; although I well recollect his opposition to the exercise of the pardoning power generally. Let him know my views upon this matter. My order is of a nature which will not admit of change. If, therefore, the order (No. 29 of 1831) purports to extend to all the offenders of the regiments referred to, and consequently to William Roberts of the First, his commanding officer must be reminded by you of the pardon of Roberts, otherwise you will send an order pardoning him.

Let Lieutenant Stockton be furloughed, as requested.

On the subject of "*Intemperance,*" I have to remark, that a soldier should never be *discharged* by reason of this vice, even if his drunkenness is *habitual*, lest others too willingly fall into that vice, in order thereby to win the privilege of a discharge; they should, on the contrary, be put on bread and water, and have the benefit of a rigid course of discipline calculated to cure, if possible, their darling vice. See Mr. Clark's letter written by my order to Colonel Clinch, in April or May last.

Let Lieutenant Miller be furloughed for the benefit of his health for two months. I hope to meet him on my return in the Western District of this State, or Jefferson Barracks; — say so to him.

I thank you for your attention to my Letter and Order Book. Let them remain in the office until otherwise desired. I wish them to contain only such letters and orders as refer to some principle of military law to which I have paid particular attention; or some matter which may seem to require my attention in future: long court-martial details or proceedings need not be inserted, excepting such as have required a very particular reference to doubted or doubtful principles of military law. I wish, however, an exact copy of the index of each book for the last and the present year to be inserted.

I had the pleasure to find my family in good health, with the exception of one member, who has recently recovered.

I am, with great regard, your friend, E. P. Gaines.

Asst. Adjt. Gen. G. A. McCall,
Aide-de-Camp, &c., &c.

P.S.—I will try to find time to write to my friend General Atkinson before the mail closes.

Jefferson Barracks, Oct. 22, 1831.

Dear General: — Since my letter of the 31st ult. I have had the honor to receive the copies of your letters to General Macomb and Colonel Clinch, of the 9th and 15th ult.

Captain Wickliffe has forwarded through Major Davenport an application for the discharge of private James Brown of Company F, 6th Infantry. Brown was turned over to the civil authorities during the summer; was tried for the murder of Jonathan Aitkin, convicted of manslaughter, and sentenced to two years and six months solitary confinement, at the expiration of which time his term of enlistment will have nearly (if not quite) expired.

The Major submits it to your consideration, in case you order Brown's discharge, whether or not he should be mulct of whatever pay and clothing may be due him at the time of his discharge.

I enclose a letter from Major Zantzinger, requesting permission to relieve certain convicts, and to re-enlist a sergeant who (then a deserter) was pardoned per "Order No. 29," of 1830.

On the 31st ult. I received the enclosed letter from General Atkinson, requesting a furlough for Lieut. Brooke of the Sixth Regiment. I had a conversation with General Atkinson on the subject. It appears that business of some consequence requires Lt. Brooke's presence in Virginia; and knowing that you are always disposed to promote the welfare of so excellent an officer as Lt. Brooke, I gave him a furlough. A copy of the S. Order is herewith enclosed.

Should you purpose to remain on the southern frontier for any length of time, I would beg leave to request that I may be more particularly furnished with instructions on some particular points, such as the ordering of General Courts Martial for the trial of guard-house prisoners, giving discharges under certain circumstances, &c. Much time might be saved by this means.

I am, General, &c. &c.

HEADQUARTERS WESTERN DEPARTMENT.
MEMPHIS, Tenn., Dec. 28, 1831.

SIR:—My permanent headquarters being established at Memphis, you will be pleased to remove the books, papers, and furniture of your office to this place as soon as may be convenient, accompanied with a good clerk, to be selected by you and detailed for this service.

Wishing to see you soon, I offer you assurance of my constant regard. EDMUND P. GAINES,

Major-General commanding.

Aide-de-Camp MCCALL,

Acting Asst. Adjt. Gen., Jefferson Barracks, Mo.

P. S.—I have been in very ill health during the last three weeks. I am now much better. My first attack was influenza, which soon took the form of a distressing ear-ache, accompanied with fever. I have several papers for your office, which I will retain until your arrival here. Tender my affectionate regards to General and Mrs. Atkinson, and all other friends near you.

Yours, with the truest regard,

EDMUND P. GAINES.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., January 22, 1832.

MY DEAR B——: [LATE JUDGE ADVOCATE, W. D.]

Arrived at length, I am located — not settled — at this chosen spot, and my journey finished, one of my first and most agreeable employments is to have a little epistolary chat with one whose conversational qualities were wont to be the source of so much pleasure to me; though I would that I had something of more interest to communicate than the history of my own adventures since I left you (and with sincere regret I call it to mind) in the thraldom of that diabolical Tertian. How are you? Have you at length shaken off your fetters? Are you at length at liberty to enter into a voluntary servitude, the slavery of the law? Yes, I perceive it, you have commenced your new career; but, how I see your wearied eyelids droop, as the sleepy god lays his leaden sceptre upon your brow, while you pore over the dull pages of Coke and Blackstone. But, *corragio soldado*, with "time and I against any other two" (as the Spaniard hath it) for your motto, you need ask no odds of the world.

But to talk of one's self is the chief object of all familiar letter-writers; and it would be strange if I did not fall into so agreeable a fashion. "I tell you, Hal!" I had a most perilous journey from St. Louis, through Illinois and Indiana to Louisville,—more hair-breadth escapes and vexations upon vexations than would fill a volume; but fear not, I am not going to inflict upon you an account of them. I will give you the only bright page that enlivens the history of my travels. It was a *Grouse-supper!*—a gloriously glowing, delicate Grouse-supper!—to which I sat down at my old friend Mrs. Halstead's with a proper appetite and a becoming resolution to handle a bright knife and fork to the best advantage.

I arrived at about 9 o'clock, and was ushered into the room where I had passed many a pleasant hour with R. H——, during the grouse-shooting season. At last supper was announced;—oh, H., my dainty sir, it was a supper worthy to be marked with a *white stone.* Here was the fond association of the past with the present pleasure; and when I cast my eyes before me, there, *there,* with all the charms of reality, *there* was the delicious union of gravies and juices in the sweet concord of nuptial harmony! Oh, it was a sight, it was a scene, the very remembrance of which I could dwell upon for hours with delight. But it will not efface from my memory our many pleasant *partridge suppers,* at the Barracks, where *wine and mirth* made the night move lightly by.

I reached Louisville on New Year's day, and passed the evening at Mrs. B——'s, and of course passed it very pleasantly in company with Louisa, who is the only girl I ever met whose face, whose features and manner come near the idea I have formed, from the pictures I have seen, of Mary Queen of Scots. There is certainly a marked resemblance which no one can fail to see! She pressed me to remain the next day and go to a dinner-party at her Uncle's (Mr. H——'s), and I confess I considered myself entitled to some credit for self-denial when I declined on the score of duty, for ignorant of the General's arrival at this place, I felt it incumbent on me to be at the new Headquarters as soon as practicable.

On my arrival here, to my surprise I found the General and his family. None of us are *fixed* yet:—we are living at Spaulding's tavern, where, according to the language of the country, we are accommodated; which, in my acceptation of the phrase, is being extremely *discommoded* by the *hours*, ways, and manners (as far as I can discover any) of the people about us, all which are unlike and unsuited to my own; but I must hope for a change for the better, and live on anticipation.

I am just called to look at a fine horse offered to me for sale,—so I must bid you adieu. Apropos! how did Calvert sell my horses? If he has not sold them yet, you had better let them go for what they will bring in the market. Be so good as to say so to him.

I am, my dear B——, yours sincerely.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., Jan. 15, 1832.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—After two years passed on the Atlantic seaboard and on the upper Mississippi, I find myself again for the second time here at Memphis, on the banks of the great father of waters. Two years ago, I left Florida for the East, and reached New Orleans in a little schooner from Tampa; then steamed up the Mississippi to this place. I then little thought I should ever be ordered here on any permanent duty, as this is likely to prove. On the occasion to which I refer, I passed one night here. It was an extremely hot one; there was not a breath of air stirring, and I felt cruelly the loss of our land or night breeze at Tampa. To add to the unpleasantness of my situation, I was put into a very moderate-sized bed-room with two other persons,—the one an old gentleman, the other a young man, and as I understood him to say, of Philadelphia; but the *au comble* of my ill-luck was to come. No sooner had the old gentleman got to bed than he commenced the most terrific snoring,—I vow, I never heard the like;—it was hand-saw filing, it was roaring, it was whistling, all at once, and executed at the rate or power of a small steam-engine. Directly after the commencement of this serenade, the young gentleman called to me, complaining bitterly that he had been kept awake all the night before on the steamer with a bilious colic, and now needed rest and sleep. Directly, he called out to the old gentleman, whom he roused with,—

"My friend! my *good* friend! is there anything the matter with you?"

"No," was the gruff answer; and in two minutes the thunder, the handsaw-filing, and the whistling was renewed with additional force. Again the younger stranger called aloud,—

"My friend, is there anything the matter with you?"

"No, *sir!*" retorted the elder stranger; "why do you ask?"

"I require sleep, my friend, and I cannot sleep while you snore," said the younger.

"Well, I am not unreasonable," said the elder, mildly. "I will endeavor to keep awake until you get asleep."

The elder, however, notwithstanding his promise, began to snore again in five minutes, and before the younger gentleman had been able to so calm and soothe his excited nerves as to reach that much-envied condition when "*nature's sweet restorer—gentle sleep*" falls unasked upon the senses. Again he called out more petulantly than before, —

"It is impossible for me to sleep, sir, while you snore."

The elder gentleman then good-naturedly said, —

"I will get up and sit by the window. The fresh air will probably keep me awake until you can compose yourself."

But it was of no avail: again he was wrapt in blissful forgetfulness in spite of the *fresh air;* and again he was called upon to allow his young fellow-traveller a chance to sleep. He still, with politeness, said, —

"I will let the window-sash down upon my shoulder, and try that" (it was fastened up with a nail) "until you are asleep."

And this he did with honest intentions. But although the spirit was willing, the flesh was weak; and not many precious minutes had passed before the wheezing, the thunder, and the whistle was renewed.

"Oh, dear me!" cried the young one in an agony, "there you are again!"

This exclamation awoke the old one, who asked, in rather a determined tone, "How long do you ask, sir, to get to sleep?"

The other replied, with a weak voice, "I think, if I had fifteen minutes of undisturbed quiet, it would do."

"Well, sir," was the reply, "I'll give you fifteen minutes, and if you are not asleep, d—n you, I'll come to bed to you, and snore you to death!"

At this explosion, I, who was greatly amused at the whole affair, could hold in no longer, but burst out into an incontrollable fit of laughter. Whether a dread of the fulfilment of the threat, or whether nature had at last sunk overpowered, I cannot say, for during this pause in the hostilities I fell asleep, and did not wake in the morning until the old gentleman was gone; the younger was still there, alive, and apparently making up for lost time. I left him to inquire about the stage, and saw him no more.

At the time of this my first visit to Memphis, this bedroom scene made such an impression upon my memory, that, were I to live to the age of Methuselah, I should remember every word that passed, and have often told the story, though I believe never to yourself. When I arrived here the other day, I came to *the* hotel, still kept by the *same* landlord, and was lodged in the identical room, though, the house having been enlarged, I was the sole occupant. The coincidence brought the occurrence so forcibly to my memory, that I could not resist the temptation of repeating to you, verbatim, what passed on that eventful night.

At the time I speak of, the public conveyance of passengers between Memphis and Nashville was by stage. We set out at noon. Our company was a gentleman, his wife, and child, of Jackson; two gentlemen of Nashville, and myself. We were seven days travelling the route, lying by on Sunday. We passed over many miles of those execrable roads called "corduroys";—they are roads through the Swamp, made by laying fence-rails round or angular, crooked or straight, perpendicularly across the way.

As I chose this route in order to see the country, I had a capital chance to see the worst of it, passing through Somerville, Bolivar, Jackson, Reynoldsburg, and Charlotte, to Nashville. I walked five or six miles every day. The day we left Reynoldsburg was one of intense suffering to man and beast; the heat was almost intolerable, and by the time we reached the mountain, the horses were fagged out. The men walked the whole way to relieve them. We reached the mountain-top at four o'clock P. M. Here was the usual place of changing horses, the next stage being six miles to Charlotte, where we were to sup and sleep. But through some accident, the horses we should have had had been sent away; it proved a providential thing, as will appear in the sequel. In reporting the fact, the driver proposed to the company to remain at this house and take supper; that we could rest till two o'clock in the morning, by which time his horses would be in condition to go on; and that he would take us to Charlotte in time for breakfast and the next stage. The party yielded a willing assent, for I believe they were all in want of rest. Soon after our arrival, I looked down the steep mountain-side, and away in the distance, across the plain, I observed just peering above the horizon a cloud of inky blackness.

It rose rapidly, and came on towards us with hurried strides. The rain soon began to fall, though the centre of the storm passed to the north of us. At two, however, we resumed our journey. The moon was up, and gave light enough, though rain was still falling from scattering clouds. At the distance of three and a half miles we came to where the tornado — for such indeed it had been — crossed our road through an oak and hickory wood of majestic trees. After a great deal of hard work, lifting the stage over trees, we succeeded in getting down a steep bluff into a meadow, and in this way reached Charlotte at eleven o'clock A. M. Here was a scene to excite our warmest sympathy. The hurricane, about one hundred yards in width, had passed directly through the centre of the village or county town, and not a single house, I believe, entirely escaped injury. The court-house, quite a large brick building, standing in the centre of the public square, was levelled with the ground. A log house on the street north of the court-house, that stood alone, was literally blown away, *not one log being left* upon the site where it stood; but lay scattered down the hill in the rear. A two-story brick dwelling, at the southwest corner of the square, had the whole of the second story carried entirely away; the wall being cut off at the level of the wainscoting as smoothly as if done by a mason; and yet a four-post bedstead on the east side of the room was untouched, and with the mosquito-net still stretched upon the posts uninjured. The pine posts of another bedstead on the south side, where the three children slept, were also standing straight above the remains of the wall; and what is as strange as all this, is, that the children were in bed at the time, and the only injury was a little bruise on the hand of one of them, caused by a falling brick. No one was killed, and but few slight wounds were received. The country for miles was covered with boards and shingles; and we were told that a large folio report-book, belonging to the court-house, had been brought in by a countryman from a distance of three miles. We breakfasted, and got off about one o'clock. We reached Nashville without further adventure, having escaped the storm by our detention; thence I proceeded to Louisville, and thence to Wheeling, and so on to Washington, where I reported and received my special orders. Adieu.

Mr. McCall's letter containing the substance of the communication from Governor Reynolds to the Secretary of War, is the only *official* information which has reached me since my arrival at this place, upon the subject of the Indian War. Unofficial rumors contain no new evidence of hostility; and they are in accordance with the Governor's impression that there is sufficient force under General Atkinson, to bring the war to an effective termination.

I have put off writing until the arrival of the mails from Louisville and Shawneetown, in the hope of obtaining some information: in this I am disappointed, and have only a moment to write before the closing of the mail. I shall probably return to Memphis by the next stage. With great regard,

E. P. GAINES.

G. A. McCALL. MEMPHIS, Tenn., June 26, 1832.

NASHVILLE, Tenn, June 21, 1832.

DEAR SIR:—I have just now received your letter of the 17th of this month. A report is in circulation that General Atkinson has had a fight with Black-Hawk — a very handsome fight; that the enemy was whipped, not however until a loss of nearly 300 had occurred on each side. The report, however, wants confirmation.

I was greatly in hopes of hearing from General Atkinson this evening, but have been disappointed. Having waited in the indulgence of this hope until the time of closing the mail, I have only time to write this much, and to add that I have no news, but a letter from our excellent friend General Cadwalader, in which he desires to be kindly remembered to you. I am truly and respectfully,

Your friend,

MR. MCCALL, *Memphis, Tenn.* E. P. GAINES.

MEMPHIS, July 15, 1832.

MY DEAR M——:

Six months' residence here has made me acquainted with several very pleasant families, with some one of which I frequently pass an agreeable evening. My duties are such, too, as to allow a sufficient indulgence of my shooting proclivities, and I have been agreeably surprised by the receipt of a fine young pointer dog sent to me by my father from Philadelphia. Partridges are abundant, and the shooting lasts from September to February. In the latter month, the shooting is splendid. The weather is fine, the temperature mild, the birds full-grown, strong, fly like the wind, and of full and delicious muscle for the table. They collect in large numbers in the twenty or fifty acre corn-fields, where the grass and weeds afford both good cover and abundance of food. Practice is making me a pretty good shot. A few days ago I killed twenty single birds out of twenty-one successive shots, and afterwards seven more. My young dog, whose name, *Grouse*, was engraved on his collar when he arrived, proves to be worthy of the famous stock from Trenton, N. J., whence he came. Some weeks ago he performed a singular exploit that I think deserves to be recorded. While shooting in a field two or three birds from a covey, I was engaged with crossing the fence into a beautifully open wood. I followed and came to a little patch of marsh formed by the water from a trifling spring; on coming to which, Grouse, who was coursing rapidly, winded the birds on the opposite side of the marsh. He dashed over at the same speed, and when about half-way, I saw him make a perpendicular bound into the air; greatly alarmed at the sight, I exclaimed to a youth, the son of a friend who had accompanied me, "My dog is struck by a snake!" I had not failed to remark, however, that as the dog passed over what I felt confident must be a snake, he turned his head to the left and downwards, and I heard his jaws snap. I hurried to this spot, while Grouse went across the wet ground and stood his point. On reaching the spot, I found a large *moccason* or *cotton-mouth* snake writhing on the ground, with his head crushed and his upper jaw broken on both sides near the commissure, so that the reptile could not close it; but there it stood perpendicular and disclosing the whole of the interior of his immense dead-white, or, as it is well named, "cotton-mouth." This is one of the most venomous snakes of the United States, and of a more savage disposition than the rattlesnake. The latter may be termed the lion, while the former is worthy to be denominated the tiger of snakes. One glance removed all concern as to the safety of my dog, and with my heel I finished the monster's days. I now looked up with pride and admiration at Grouse, who was standing his point like a statue, as if nothing had occurred. I walked up to him and gave him the command "forward," and killed the bird when it rose. I then carefully examined his lips and his head, and found all right. Take it altogether, it was one of the prettiest feats I ever saw performed by a dog. Occasionally I have seen a deer while riding through the woods, but never have been so fortunate as to get a shot at one.

[EXTRACT.]

MEMPHIS, November 2, 1832.

MY DEAR BROTHER:— . . . . A few nights since my dog Grouse exhibited a striking evidence of his sagacity. You must know that he usually sleeps in my room, on the rug in front of the fire. Before I retired to bed, on the night in question, I covered up the coals of a wood fire, as is my habit, and was soon in a sound sleep. About midnight I was awakened by Grouse, who had my left arm above the elbow in his jaws, and was shaking me pretty roughly. As soon as fairly awake, I discovered that I had been sleeping in a suffocating smoke that filled the room. Springing up, I threw open the windows, and then discovered that a spark from the smouldering fire had fallen upon the rug, which was of cotton material, and had consumed about one-fourth of it around the centre. Taking the ewer from the wash-stand, I poured a little water around the glowing edges, apparently extinguishing all fire, tossed the ruined movable into a heap with my foot, and the room being again refreshed with a new atmosphere, I went to bed and was soon lost in sleep. How long I had slept I know not; but again I was aroused by my dog in the same way that I had previously been. Again the room was full of smoke; again I sprang up; threw up the window to get air; but this time I discovered that the fire I had thought extinguished had revived, and had burned not only through the floor, but half-way through the joist directly under, from which a faint but perceptible blaze was beginning to rise; there was every appearance that, had I slept half an hour longer, I should have had to make my way out of the room through the flames. With the water that still remained in the ewer, and some four or five gallons in the foot-bath, economically applied, I succeeded in making the extinguishment complete this time, without disturbing any one in the house; the vile *rug*, the cause of all this menacing of serious conflagration, I threw out of the window upon the grass plot, to expire at its leisure. But I took care to represent to the landlord, and more particularly to the landlady, the *distinguished service* rendered by Grouse in the *affair*. And I have noticed since that he gets a good word always in passing the *mistress*.

MEMPHIS, Tenn., March 5, 1833.

MY DEAR SIR:—It has occurred to me that if you do not take with you your servant John, you may be disposed to leave him with some of your friends. If so, and he should incline to stay with me, I should be glad to have him. But I must add that this proposition is intended to be accepted or rejected by you, as if it had come from any other person in Memphis. . . . . Your friend,

E. P. GAINES.

P. S.—If the state of your funds, while absent, should render it desirable or convenient, draw on me for any sum which you may need at thirty days' sight.

E. P. GAINES.

Aide-de-Camp GEORGE A. MCCALL.
Memphis, Tenn.

SPECIAL ORDER, }
No. }

HD. QRS. WESTERN DEPARTMENT. }
MEMPHIS, Tenn., August 8, 1833. }

My senior Aide-de-Camp, Assistant Adjutant-General George A. McCall, has leave of absence for two months, ending the 3d November, 1833, at which time he will return to his duty.

EDMUND P. GAINES,
Major-General commanding.

P. S.—We suffered much with the cholera in June last, particularly Henry, who was apparently in the last stage of the disease for many hours. We are now, however, in good health, having had no death except a hired servant unknown to you. We shall rejoice to see you, and none more than Mr. Miller, who is very desirous to have a leave of absence and relief from his confinement. He will probably accompany me on a visit of inspection up Red River in November or December next. Mrs. Gaines, her sister, and all the boys unite in affectionate respect.

Your friend,
E. P. GAINES.

Aide-de-Camp G. A. MCCALL,
Philadelphia.

I send a copy of the leave of absence to Cincinnati, lest you may have left Philadelphia on your return.

MEMPHIS, December 25, 1833.

. . . . Having received a short leave of absence during the autumn, I made a visit to the East, to look to some pecuniary interests requiring my presence, and returned a few weeks since. I came by steamer from Pittsburg, and brought with me thence a remarkably fine horse of Virginia blood, a present from my father, whom I found at Butler, Pa., on his return from his Virginia lands. Another, a Kentucky horse, I took on board at Louisville, my duties here requiring me to be mounted. These steeds were landed safely at eleven at night, though not until by some mismanagement the Kentucky horse had leaped from the wharf into the Mississippi and swum ashore some distance below. The Kentucky horse is a fine animal; but the Virginian, which I call *Redbird*, (he is a blood bay,) is such a horse as a man meets with only once in a lifetime. His limbs seem to be made of "*clockwork and steam;*" so much elasticity in his step, such freedom of motion, and such noble carriage were never coupled with such an indomitable spirit and such a fearless and half vicious disposition. He has already bitten my groom through shirt and vest till he brought the blood from about his ribs, has kicked Grouse once out of the stable-door and sent him flying across the yard, where he lay for some time, apparently more dead than alive; and besides all this, the third time I rode him out to shoot partridges, as I dismounted with my gun he turned on me, let fly his heels, drove one of the corks of his shoe into the fore-part of my thigh, tumbled me over, and before I could rise and raise my gun upon him for the purpose of returning the compliment with a load of partridge-shot, he was out of sight. On this occasion I happened to be near a small farm-house; my wound was bleeding freely, and though the bone was not injured, the limb soon became much swollen and quite stiff. I made my way to the house, where I found only the old woman, the old man having gone to town. Observing a white horse in the field next the house, I explained my case and inquired whether I could hire the horse to ride home. The old lady seeing the blood on my clothes, without answering my question, begged me to come into the house, that she might bind up my wound and stanch the blood. Seeing that I had to deal with a very decided person, and perceiving that the quickest way to arrive at a satisfactory reply to my question was to comply, I walked in and took a seat, whilst the matron busied herself in tearing off a bandage from a clean under-garment of her own, which she took from an old-fashioned bureau, and upon it spread a mixture of brown sugar and vinegar with which to emplaster my hurt. Having cut with her scissors a slit in the leg of my pantaloons sufficiently large to receive the plaster, she then bound it on under the pantaloons and told me to lie down on the bed. Seeing that I obeyed all her commands without demurring, she then said, "Now I will see if I can catch the horse for you." She disappeared; and I presumed so far to disobey the injunction laid upon me, as to raise myself upon my elbow and look through the window to see what success she might have with the gray horse. She advanced towards him, holding out an ear of corn in her hand and calling him by name. The horse came up a few paces and smelled at the corn, but as soon as he saw the bridle he whirled round and bounded off. Nothing dashed at this, the old lady followed him up, holding the bridle behind her; but the gray having once caught a glimpse of it, could not be coaxed into captivity. My hostess certainly persevered with a spirit worthy of success, until I got so out of patience with the old gray that I bounced off the bed with a sudden and mighty impulse to fly to her assistance; but my game-leg had scarcely touched the floor before I discovered that it was not only unfit for running, but even to bear the weight of my body. The next moment my kind hostess came in quite out of breath. Seating herself in the rocking-chair, she drew a long breath and thus addressed me, "You must needs content yourself to lie there till sundown, when the horse will come home to be fed, or my husband will be back from town." Saying this, she placed a book within my reach on the bed, and left the room to attend to the house-affairs. I took up the book, which proved a copy of an old edition of the Pilgrims' Progress. I was soon in sweet converse with old John Bunyan, and the time passed unconsciously till the dim light of the room made me sensible that sunset was at hand. The old man soon came in; and having expressed his regret at the accident, brought the horse to the door and assisted me to mount. Judging from appearances, I concluded that their circumstances were such as not to make them unwilling to receive a *largesse*, I slipped a note into the old man's hand, and promising to send the gray home in the morning, I bid them adieu. I got home well enough; but had to be carried up-stairs. The doctor found the wound a severe one; and I was a week on my back. During that period I ordered Redbird to be exercised daily; but he threw every one who rode him, and then quietly returned to the stable, as he did after leaving me in the woods.

Notwithstanding these vicious tricks, I valued him more than any horse I had ever owned, except "*my first love*," Kate. Redbird's gaits were as smooth as oil. I could ride him hard all day, and he would come in at night with the same elasticity of tread that he had in the morning. When on his back, I felt secure in running him through the woods or over any obstacle, for he was as light and as surefooted as a cat. I could fire from his back with perfect ease, as he never flinched at the report of a gun. When I dismounted, Grouse having found a covey of partridges, he would remain perfectly quiet while I was shooting round him; but as soon as I had finished with the covey and returned to mount, he would lay his ears back and kick at me, as I approached, in the most spiteful manner. I had to watch my opportunity to run in at his head, when I have sometimes punched him in the side with the muzzle of my double-barrel gun, as he would try to turn on me, till one would think I must break his ribs, before he could be made to stand while I unfastened his halter; and then the moment that was done I had to spring into the saddle, or he would be off with his heels flying in the air. I could scarcely get a smith in Memphis to shoe him; and he sometimes went bare on that account. At last a smith, who had lately come to Memphis, sent me word he had been used to shoeing all sorts of horses, and was not afraid of Redbird. I told my servant George to take him to the shop; and about two hours afterwards, while writing in my office, I heard the tramp of a horse. (I had taken a small house, with a court-yard in front and a stable in rear.) I looked through the door and saw Redbird entering the front gate, with the blacksmith's leather apron tied over his eyes, and the blacksmith's tongs hanging to his nose. I followed him to the stable, where I found my poor horse with the apron tied over his eyes and the tongs with a cord fastened to the end and twisted round his upper lip, and the two front shoes on his feet, while the hind feet were bare. The blacksmith's striker, with George, soon followed, to claim his property. He told me his boss was tired, but if I would send the horse back in the morning, he would shoe him or die.

After breakfast I directed George to take the horse to the shop; and believing that Redbird knew me better and feared me more than any one else, I followed, thinking I might exercise some influence. The smith was ready and full of pluck. He directed his striker to apply his instrument to the horse's upper lip; and while I stood at his head with the halter in my hand, the smith fearlessly took the left hind-foot in his hand. He had scarcely brought it between his knees and applied the buttress, when Redbird launching out that leg, rather forcibly pushed his hock against the back of the man and caused him to turn a complete somerset. In making this revolution, the man's red wig flew off; and rather abashed at the accident than hurt by the fall, he scrambled after the wig and crushed it upon his bald pate before rising from his knees.

When thus reinstated, he returned to the charge as fearless as at first. In fact, after an hour's hard work of all three of us, I had the satisfaction to see Redbird go home with a full set of shoes wonderfully well put on. After rewarding the blacksmith for his pluck as well as his skill, I returned home rejoicing in my good-fortune.

In this notice of Redbird, I have "*nothing extenuated, nor set down aught in malice.*"

Ever yours faithfully.

[EXTRACT.]

MEMPHIS, December 29, 1833.

MY DEAR M——: I have nothing very wonderful to tell you, except that the pen with which I indite this beautiful piece of epistolary literature was a few days since extended in the stormy regions of the clouds, directing the rapid flight of one of a party of those garrulous aquatics who from time immemorial have been celebrated for rendering essential service in the department of letters—emphatically styled the scholar's bird.

I take that to be a pretty flighty period, yet you would not expect less from a *wild*-goose quill; but I will trim down the feathery end of my pen, and tell you in plain English that I brought home the other day a fine wild goose that I killed some miles from town, and promised Mrs. H——, who is now boarding with us, and of whose husband you have heard me speak, that I would in a day or two give her a dinner that would make her the envy of Lucullus. Well, the day arriving, the dish was served with due ceremony, and every one said of course, "I'll try the wild goose." And such a trial it was too—a perfect labor of jaws on all sides except on the part of the bridegroom, whom, with his pretty bride, I had asked to join us, and who was blessed with greater powers of mastication or a greater share of complaisance than falls to the lot of most mortals. When I looked round at the wry faces, where agony and despair were strongly depicted, as Jack Downing would have said, "*I didn't know but what I should split.*" At last, unable to contain myself longer, I roared out, and the scene that followed beggars description. However, I told John to change the plates, and declared that, as we could not eat the old fellow, we would drink him. So the dish was removed, and a bottle of wine brought in, which we drank, I assure you, very merrily. After dinner I sent to Mrs. H. a pen on which I put a label to this effect: "Taken from the dexter pinion of the Patriarch of the flock that cackled on Capitol Hill, the night Brennus, at the head of the Gauls, assaulted the walls of Rome. The hero, I conclude, emigrated to this continent in an eventful year of which historians have neglected to make mention." I certainly have not laughed so heartily and so long for a great while. You must pardon the abruptness with which I terminate this letter. I am called.

Let me hear from you at your early leisure, and believe me ever affectionately yours. G.

[MEMORANDUM.]

MEMPHIS, March 12, 1833.

1. Aide-de-Camp, A. Adjt.-General McCall is requested to enter the enclosed letter in his letter-book, and then enclose it to the General-in-Chief.

2. He is desired to send to my address at Florence, Tenn., until the 17th, and to Columbia, Tenn., until the 20th, and to Nashville until the 25th, all such letters as may seem to require my attention, or copies thereof.

3. He will perform all the duties of his office, and open all official letters addressed to me, as usual, and act as in his judgment the good of the service requires.

Hoping to return in two weeks or thereabouts, I am, with great regard,
EDMUND P. GAINES.

P. S.—I send subjoined an order which Mr. McCall is desired to send to Paymaster De Russy for collection, and when received place the amount to my credit.
E. P. GAINES.

[The following was sent on the eve of the departure of the General, with Mrs. Gaines and his youngest son Edmund, for Nashville.]

Mr. McCall will receive herewith the key of my best wine, which he is desired to make use of and recommend to any of our friends who may visit him. And if anything should occur to render his removal necessary or desirable, there are two rooms here, (the parlor and adjacent chamber,) which Mrs. G. and myself unite in recommending to him.

With great regard,
E. P. GAINES.

Fairfield, near Memphis,
Monday morning, Nov. 12, 1833.

P. S.—I have engaged a coachman (in place of my sick man Ben) at Mr. Roswell's, three miles from town, and have to ask the favor of your man John to drive out that far this morning—as soon as convenient. E. P. G.

MEMPHIS, April 15, 1833.

DEAR ——: One morning in March, George came to my room before breakfast and reported that the stable-door had been broken open during the night, and the Kentucky horse had been stolen. I ordered him to saddle Redbird at once. I then breakfasted, buckled on a brace of belt-pistols under my overcoat, and mounted my horse. I made a semicircle around the town from the Mississippi to Wolf River, examining all by-roads, for the tracks of my horse, which I had learned from the

Seminoles how to distinguish; and also to make inquiries of the people living near the town. I however got no information of any kind. I then made a wider circuit of four or five miles, but still without success. I now concluded to take the main stage-road toward Nashville, and to make inquiry as I went. I rode rapidly when in motion; but I had lost so much time in branching off to search or make inquiry, that it was two o'clock when I reached Raleigh, the capital of our county, ten miles N. E. of Memphis. Here I stopped at the hotel to seek information. After spending near an hour in this pursuit, I met a man who informed me that he had remarked about breakfast-time two men riding up the road, each with a led horse, one of which was a large chestnut answering very well to the description of my *Kentuck*. I immediately mounted, and giving Redbird the spur, was soon on the track of these gentlemen at a rapid pace. I heard of them now and then on the road, and the description of one of the led horses always answered to Kentuck. At a road-side tavern, eight miles from Raleigh, they told me these men had stopped a few minutes to get something to drink and light a cigar. Dinner was over, but they were asked to have their horses put up, while dinner was prepared for them; but they preferred going on. I put Redbird to his work again, and just before sunset I drew up at another tavern four miles beyond. The landlord came to the door, and in answer to my inquiries said the persons I referred to were then in his house. I asked, where were their horses. He replied, they were in his stable; and to my request to be permitted to see them he granted a ready assent. Without further parley, I hitched Redbird to the post, and marched in to the stable, which was on the opposite side of the road and in front of the inn. I found six horses there, and the hostler pointed out the four belonging to the travellers; the others he said were his master's.

One glance showed me that I had come upon the wrong trail. Kentuck was not there, though there was a fine chestnut horse, that in general features much resembled him. On returning to the house, I walked into the sitting-room to warm my feet, for the day had been raw and my feet had been many hours in the stirrups. I found there by the fire two persons who undoubtedly were the travellers I had been following. They politely made room for me at the fire; and it was clear that the landlord had communicated to them the object of my visit, for the more respectable of the two, after a moment, turned to me and said, —

"Cold riding to-day, sir." To which I assented. After a short pause he again addressed me thus: —

"I started from Clarksburg (on the Cumberland) with a flat-boat and twenty horses for New Orleans, and ten miles below Memphis my boat was wrecked, and I lost all my horses but four. And after such luck as that, it's rather hard to be taken for a horse-thief."

I replied, laughing, "It is hard! it's too hard! but, my friend, the circumstances were such as to require me to find out who you were." I then narrated to him how my horse had been stolen, and how I had got upon his trail. I added, that, in addition to the general resemblance to his sorrel, mine had a small scar on his right buttock from the horn of a bull when a colt, by which he could not fail to identify Kentuck. And I continued, "I will give fifty dollars for the capture of the thief, and twenty-five for the horse."

After a good laugh as I described my adventures, and declining an invitation to stay and sup with them, I rode back to Raleigh, where I put up Redbird for the night, after a ride of at least forty miles. I returned home after an early breakfast, and put an advertisement in the newspaper, offering the rewards I have named. A few days ago, (some three weeks after the horse was stolen,) a common-looking man rode up to my gate on Kentuck, and having dismounted and hitched the horse, came into my office and handed me a note from a Dr. Hawkins, living some thirty miles north of Memphis. The note stated that, three weeks previous, as he was about to mount his horse after breakfast to visit a patient in the neighborhood, a man came up the road and, accosting him, said he had been riding hard, and had to go twenty miles further to see a brother who was dying, and as his horse was fagged out, he would be glad to exchange horses, if the Doctor would give him twenty dollars to boot. The Doctor, in his note, acknowledged that he had been taken in; for having recently seen my advertisement, he was convinced by the scar on the buttock that the horse was mine. He concluded his note by requesting me to keep the horse, if mine, and to pay the reward to the man who delivered him. The man told me that Johnson the hotel landlord knew him. So that, having seen Johnson, and satisfied myself that he knew the messenger, and Doctor Hawkins also, I paid the reward and sent Kentuck to the stable.

Last month I had some snipe-shooting, though these birds were not numerous, this meridian not being in their line of march to the north. In January, in Florida, I met with them in the wet prairies, which they quit in February to proceed on their spring tour to the upper latitudes where they nest. Adieu.

NASHVILLE, TENN., April 28, 1835.

DEAR SIR:—Having in part arranged my business so as to enable me to return, by the last of the next week, to Memphis, I wish you to write to me once only after the receipt of this—say by the return mail—should anything important occur. Accompanying this, I send you the Army Register with a Special Order, No. ——, and the copy of a letter to Major Thompson. The newspapers contain all the news met with at this place. Very respectfully, your friend,

EDMUND P. GAINES.

Major GEO. A. McCALL,
A. D. C., Asst. Adjt. Gen.,
Memphis, Tenn.

COURTLAND, Alabama, July 5, 1835.

MY DEAR FATHER:— . . . . I believe I mentioned to you in my last that I expected to accompany the General on a ride through this part of the country—one that I had always heard extolled for the wealth and hospitality of its planters, and the varied beauty of its natural scenery. The General had been invited by the Directors of the Tuscumbia and Courtland Railroad to be present at the inauguration of their road on the 4th of July of the present year, being the 59th of the American Independence. As the General had accepted the invitation, we left headquarters eight days ago; the General mounted on Redbird in preference to any one of four or five of his own horses; and having ridden him one hundred and sixty miles, he now declares he is the best horse he has mounted for ten years. The General is a fine rider, and Redbird has been on his good behavior. I am glad of it, for his malicious spirit, which for some time has lain dormant, may at any time show itself again.

The General starts in the stage to-morrow for Huntsville, where he has business; thence he goes in like conveyance to Nashville. As I do not like that mode of travelling, I have proposed for myself to return to Tuscumbia, where we left our horses, and thence proceed to Nashville to meet him. Redbird's back was a little chafed by the ride; and if he is not fit for duty, I shall direct the General's colored servant Tom to *lead* him home, riding his own horse only; and for myself, I shall continue the journey on *Kentuck*, not only to Nashville, but thence to Memphis again.

This has been quite a charming ride. We travelled part of the way through the Chickasaw country, stopping occasionally at the houses of some of the wealthy Indians. Many of them who remain on the *Reserve* have slaves (negroes) from two or three to a dozen, and cultivate cotton as well as corn, &c. One old gentleman, quite an aristocratic-looking red man, with excellent manners, received the General with marked politeness. He has a well-cultivated plantation, which is worked with fifty slaves and a *white overseer*. On 2d inst., we arrived at Waterloo, a post-village on the Tennessee River, twenty-six miles from our destination, Tuscumbia. Here we supped, and were soon shown to our sleeping-room, about twelve feet by eight, with two cot-beds, without mosquito-nets, but *with mosquitoes* of whose numbers I could not form any very accurate estimate; but if I say about two to every cubic inch of pestiferous atmosphere the room contained, you may form a faint idea of our situation. As I set down the tallow-dip upon the table, I sent forth a long, deep-drawn sigh, and cast my eyes around and upon the dingy walls of the forlorn apartment. There stood the General in the middle, with his hat in his hand; a slight expression of indecision, such as I never saw before, crossed his countenance. "General," said I, inquiringly, "can we stand this?"

"Perhaps," he replied in his blandest manner, "the landlady can give us another room." I walked at once to the head of the stairs, which by a single flight descended to the dining-room or rather kitchen, where we had just partaken of our unsavory meal; and summoning the lady with a voice slightly elevated, in a moment she stood before me at the foot of the stairs, bolt upright, with a meat-fork in her hand, and with an air that said, *I'm ready for any emergency.* To my interrogation whether she would be pleased to show the General to a *better* room,—(I should have said, as the General had done, *another* room,)—I was assailed at once, as from a steam-engine, with a shower of words of which I could distinguish only these: "*best bedroom in the house,*" and "*good enough for anybody.*" Whereupon I withdrew to our apartment, and closing the door to shut out the conclusion of the farrago, I told the General that the landlady had done her best for him; and on my own part offered to light a cigar, and try what effect a little tobacco-smoke would have in dispersing the enemy. "A very good idea," returned he, now fully adjusted to the situation, and only studious how to better it; "and if you will give me a cigar, I'll try to help you."

Now you must bear in mind that the General is decidedly averse to the use of tobacco, both physically and morally; and in the three years that I have been a member of his military family, this is the second time I have known him to smoke a cigar; the former, like the present, being an occasion where his forbearance as well as his fortitude were sorely tested; but as a trait of his character, I must mention that when he lighted a cigar, he never took it from his mouth until he had smoked it to the end, although it was sure to make him sick. On this occasion we had taken off our coats and boots, and thrown ourselves upon the bed-covers, when I extinguished the tallow wick. He talked freely while he smoked; but at last, when I saw the stump of the cigar hurled against the wall at our feet, and its crushed embers fall and expire upon the floor, a slight sigh as he turned over upon his side gave evidence that the strong man had been overcome by the narcotic property of the weed, and had sunk into forgetfulness *malgré* the stings of our insatiable tormentors. This was in every respect the most disagreeable night that I recollect to have passed for a great while, and we set out to prosecute our journey to its termination at an early hour.

We arrived at Tuscumbia in good season, and took up our abode at the hotel—a very good house and well kept. The following morning,—the important day, the 4th of July,—after an early breakfast, the General was waited upon by a Committee of the Directors, and escorted to a car in which were assembled a number of the ladies and gentlemen of Tuscumbia and vicinity. We soon set off under high steam-pressure on all sides. An *impromptu* band of music was thundering away in a front car; the Directors, who had early commenced the celebration of this commemorable day with *mint juleps*, were in the highest plight for fun and rejoicing; they kept the whistle of the locomotive agoing to the terror of plantation negroes, whose horses and light ploughs went tearing through the cotton-fields to the great delight of the merry Directors, who, standing on the platforms or mounted on the roof of our car, added their wild shouts to the scene of general confusion which accompanied the passage of this first train that passed over their new, their only and almost idolized railway. We, however, reached Courtland, twenty-three miles, in capital time, and without accident to the train or any one on board. Here we found a large building erected in the public square, in which, at two or three sittings, some 4000 or 5000 persons, men and women, were regaled with roast-beef. The policy is a good one, as the Company wish, through the assistance of these people, to extend their road; and the sight of the locomotive—a novelty to most of these people—gives them a better idea of its power, and of the advantages that will result to themselves from the passage of its train through their country, than all that could be written or said upon the subject.

I was pleased to see these people (for in this part of Alabama there is a greater portion of whites than in the more southern counties) sit down to table, male and female, with happy faces, and an evident purpose to do honor to the liberality of the Railroad Directors; and with equal pleasure, not unmingled with astonishment, did I see the huge joints of meat vanish before the magical touches of these sons of Alabama. There was afterwards a grand dinner at the hotel, of which we partook. In the evening the festive rites closed with a ball, where all the beauty of the country was assembled. I found them educated, well-bred, and lady-like, which I had not expected in a country comparatively so new. But this beautiful valley of the Tennessee River can hardly be considered a new country. It was sought and settled by wealthy men, and like Minerva sprang at once full-grown into existence. The roads were no sooner opened, and the new occupants established in their spacious mansions, around which the broad acres of cotton whitened the land, than the stranger or the old and honored friend from Virginia or Kentucky was received and entertained in the olden style of hospitality, and with a profusion and liberality nowhere excelled.

We dined to-day with Colonel S——, one of the wealthiest planters of the Valley, whose residence is half a mile from the town. He is a Virginia gentleman of the old school, and his wife a Georgia lady, in whom I found all the suavity so beautifully combined with dignity of manner which marks the Southern women.

I have written a long letter, and my watch informs me I have gone deeply into the night; but I have been much interested in our visit to the Valley of the Tennessee, and I wished to tell you all about it. Good night, my dear father.

Major McCall is requested to ride out in time to take some of the *Veal* of "*Amalbura*" to-day with Mrs. Bowman and her worthy husband. I send my horse for him. He will receive herewith the record of the court in the case of Lieutenant S——, whose fastidious notion of his own reputation has led him into the great error of disregarding what is due to the feelings of others,—the laws of true honor,—and what is due to the other sex. The scandal was indeed very provoking, but the apology of the husband—*verbal apology*—was amply sufficient. The magnanimity of a gentleman of true courage will never allow him to demand an apology tending in any wise to degrade *him* by whom it is voluntarily offered.

Respectfully,

E. P. GAINES.

Saturday morning, June 6, 1835.

MEMPHIS, October 3, 1835.

DEAR ——: I have recently returned from a little expedition into Arkansas. In August last I learned that there were grouse (the pinnated grouse) in a prairie on this side of the Arkansas River, and one hundred and twenty miles west of the Mississippi River. I then determined, if an opportunity offered, to escape from my labors here for ten days, to pay them a visit. Early in September the much-desired opportunity occurred. I set out on the afternoon of the sixth, with George, the two horses, Grouse, the gun, and plenty of ammunition.

I arranged with Captain Bowman, an old and valued friend, of the Engineer Corps of the Army, who is here under orders to locate a road from this point to Little Rock, and Mr. Gholson, a most estimable gentleman residing here, to meet me at Strong's Ferry, on the St. Francis River, sixty miles from Memphis, on the twentieth of the month, under the promise to give them there a grouse-supper, to which they were to contribute the wine.

All the preliminaries having been amicably settled, I crossed the Mississippi in a ferry-boat, mounting Redbird, and followed by the other members of my party. I pushed on to reach a very comfortable stand twenty miles distant before nightfall. There we arrived without accident at dusk, and were comfortably established for the night. The next day we went to Strong's by two o'clock P. M., and learning there that there was a good house fifteen miles further on, I continued my journey, and arrived at my destination at sunset, making that day fifty-five miles. The whole distance from the Mississippi to the St. Francis, sixty miles, is through swamp and cane-break country, which at the time of the June flood in the upper Missouri and Mississippi rivers is overflowed, and from one to three or four feet under water. It was at this time dry, except on the margins of Blackfish Creek, which we forded.

From the west bank of the St. Francis to the house where I stopped that night the country was rather high and rolling, and was clothed with a good growth of oak and hickory timber, indicating a good soil. The only game I saw was a brace of gobblers. The next morning I was in the saddle as soon as it was light. It was forty-five miles to Mrs. Black's, my destination, and of that distance twenty must be made before I reached the prairie. I was of course eager to get upon the prairie, as I contemplated finding grouse in traversing the plain to Mrs. Black's. Five miles on our way we came to a deep ravine, at the bottom of which flowed a little rivulet. An old bridge spanned the ravine, the appearance of which was so forbidding that, as I entered upon it, I cautioned George not to follow me too closely lest the united weight of our horses might prove too much for it. I proceeded carefully, selecting the least decayed portions of the flooring, but had not reached the middle when Redbird's hind legs went completely through, and his belly rested on a cross-tie.

It was an ugly predicament; my feet rested on the floor, and not a thought could have passed before I was lifting my right leg to relieve him of my weight, when "*his clockwork and steam*" were brought into requisition. His forefeet were on sound timber, and by one of those powerful efforts he sometimes made, he threw himself out, with my weight upon his back,—I really cannot tell, nor could I see then how. I immediately dismounted and led him forward a few paces, when I discovered that the only injury he had received was a rather ugly scratch on the inside of each thigh. "Was there ever such a horse!" I exclaimed to George, who had been looking on in amazement, from which he had not yet recovered when I told him to dismount. By picking our way, we got safely over. At ten o'clock we reached White River, and were ferried over. Six miles further would bring me to the prairie; this distance was performed in an hour; and in another hour, as we travelled the road, Grouse, while ranging in front, came upon and stood a pack of his namesakes. These were the first birds of the kind he had ever met with, and he stood like an old dog who had passed his life among them. I dismounted and knocked over two of the eight that rose. As they went off a good way to the left of our course, I did not follow them. I will merely add that we travelled at a fair pace, and I reached Mrs. Black's before sunset, having bagged seven grouse, one of which I shot from the saddle as he rose almost in front of Redbird. I found in Mrs. Black a widow of goodly proportions: I have seen fatter women, but not many.

She had several sons and daughters growing up. She kept a public (being the half-way) house between Little Rock and White River. The house was a log building, a point of fine timber land stretching out from the south to within half a mile of the house, which was one of those structures called in the West "*two pens and a passage,*" which means two rooms from ten to twenty feet apart, the whole under one roof. One of these was the dining-room, the other the sleeping-room; the kitchen and other apartments occupied by the family, built likewise of logs, were in the rear.

When I arrived, there was no company at the house, and I had the room in which there were four single beds all to myself, and Grouse slept under my bed. This happy state of things continued for four days. My routine was to have the horses saddled after breakfast, when I would ride out to north, south, or east, accompanied by George, who was always ready to hold my horse if I dismounted. I roamed anywhere at liberty, for there was not a farm as far as I could see on the prairie, except my landlady's.

On the fifth day there came at eventide six "*rafters*," as the timber-cutters are called, in reference to their forming the timber into rafts, which they float down the rivers when the waters are high. These men were from White River, and were on their way to Little Rock. As there were seven of us to occupy the sleeping-room, and only four beds, there would have to be some doubling when the sleeping arrangements came under consideration. Therefore after supper, when I saw that bedtime was drawing nigh, I retired to my own bed, or the one I had always occupied, which stood in the upper corner of the room, while the other three stood side by side against the opposite wall. Grouse took his post, and I felt perfectly secure against the invasion of my premises. Almost immediately after I was ensconced, five of the party came in and very quietly went to bed, four of them occupying two of the cots, and the fifth taking the third cot. In a few minutes the sixth "rafter" made his appearance, and, having divested himself of coat and boots, walked towards my bed. I lay still, confident as to the result; and as the man came to the bedside, Grouse met him with a low growl;

the man quietly walked round to the opposite side, where Grouse met him in like manner.

"Why, what a queer dog this is!" said he, turning to his comrades.

"Oh! you'd better come here. You'll have trouble there," said the one who was alone. Whereat he who purposed participating with me the downy couch, turned about, quietly put out the candle, and turned in with his friend. This custom of sharing one's bed with a friend is so common from Virginia to Mississippi, where they only throw off coat and boots, that when John M. Botts boasted in Congress of his intimacy with President John Tyler, and exemplified it by stating that "*he had slept with the President*," he certainly had no great enduring fellowship to pride himself upon, if the thing occurred while on the circuit of county courts, and where the inn happened to be over-crowded as is too often the case. Nevertheless, although "*poverty may make us acquainted with strange bedfellows*," I did not at the moment feel that I was reduced to that strait, and I had made up my mind to oppose the intrusion in the mildest manner possible, if it came to the worst. But I had confidence in Grouse, and I thought I would leave it in the first place to him. These men were orderly, well-behaved people in every respect. I did not hear an oath or a vulgar expression from one of them while they were in the house. In the morning after breakfast, they proceeded as they came—on foot—to Little Rock. For three days more, I enjoyed undisturbed possession of the castle, and the whole extent of territory around. I shot grouse wheresoever I pleased and without let. I always found them abundant, and I continued to shoot until I was cloyed with success. They were in perfect condition for the table, and I feasted on grouse at breakfast, dinner, and supper, daily. At length the time came to turn my face homeward. The weather had been too warm to think of keeping the birds to take home with me, even if I had the means to carry them. I therefore decided to attempt to take no more than I might kill the day before starting, and such as I might pick up on the way across the prairie. On the day appointed, I did not go out until after dinner; and late in the afternoon, coming upon good ground, I bagged fifteen birds between four o'clock and sunset. These George "*drew*," as fast as they were killed, and hung carefully upon his horse. The next morning the horses were brought to the door, and I asked the landlady for my bill. Her mild reply was,—

"You owe me nothing, sir. You have fed my family and my guests on grouse all the time you have been here, and I could not think of taking anything from you."

All that I could say did not move the good old lady, and I was actually compelled to force a banknote into her hand, which I did with many thanks for her attention to all my orders or requests. As I mounted my horse, the good woman bestowed upon me her best wishes for a safe and pleasant journey.

How gratifying these little incidents always are to me, where they exhibit the native good heart, unsullied by contact and intercourse with the selfish and grasping world. It was a charming day, with a delightful breeze upon the plain. I again examined a range of small mounds near the centre of the plain, which I had noticed as I first crossed. They were about ten feet in diameter, and four to five feet high. The earth had apparently been brought from a distance, for there was no perceptible depression around the mound itself. They were sixty in number, in line from east to west, with an interval of twenty feet between them, being parallel to the road and but a short distance from it. Here is perhaps the widest part of the prairie, as it extends probably fifty miles or more to the north, and twenty to the south.

For two miles east and the same distance west of these mounds, the surface is a coarse gravel, producing only a scant growth of weeds; or perhaps, more properly speaking, I should say, plants whose properties, whether valuable or otherwise, we are unacquainted with; while beyond this ridge, running north and south in either direction, the soil is good, and is clothed with a heavy mat of grass. This ridge, although of but slight elevation, appeared to me to be the summit level, or dividing ridge, between the waters which flow into the White River and those that yield their tribute to the saline flood of the Arkansas. And although it might be difficult to designate the point where, if you should pour out a bucket of water upon the ground, one half would flow to the Arkansas River and the other half to the White River, yet I am persuaded that these mounds have been designedly erected by some primitive race of men, who intended to crown the summit of the land between the two rivers,—whether as a place of sepulture or not, I will not pretend to say.

Of course I had not time to look into them for pottery or implements of stone; nor had this ever been done, as far as I could learn. I bagged six grouse in addition to the fifteen I had with me, and arrived at White River just in time to be ferried over, before a violent rain-storm came heavily upon us. I was comfortably established before a good fire in the public room at the inn, which was upon the river-bank, when a party of *rafters*, or timber-cutters, seven in number, came in. They had been on a hunt up the river that day, and had killed a bear. They were drenched with rain, and shivering in their thin clothes. Gathering round the fire, they called for a decanter of whisky; and when it was placed upon the table, they with much civility invited me to take a glass with them. I drank with them, and they gave me an animated account of their hunt. But before supper was ready, they had finished the bottle and called for another. Again they invited me to drink. I excused myself, which I thought I could see chagrined some of them. However, I kept my seat by the fire and listened to their discourse. There was no coarse language used, but I could see that the liquor they had drunk had warmed their tempers and loosened their tongues, and I thought it barely possible I might have trouble with some one of them. I therefore scrutinized them closely to see which was the strongest man among them,—I mean he who seemed to have the strongest will, who appeared to have a commanding or controlling influence over the others. I soon fixed upon my man, and determined, when supper should be over, to make him my friend in case I should want an ally in the course of the evening. Supper was at length placed upon a table in the room where we sat. We all sat down to a very substantial as well as well-prepared meal; and all went off very quietly and properly. I had a famous appetite after my ride, and did full justice to the White-River cuisine. After supper I took a cigar; and seating myself by the man I had selected, I offered him one. This opened the way to conversation, and I found him an intelligent and energetic fellow, and in fact the chief of the party, though all were in the employ of the man who owned the inn. The latter was away; and there were only the women about the house. At once I took quite a fancy to my head-man, who was not over one-and-twenty, but of a strong natural intellect, and perfect self-reliance. He felt flattered by my attention, and in return paid great deference, not only to myself, but to all that I said. He gave me quite an interesting account of the hard life these rafters lead, exposed to every hardship and privation, and to the malaria of the regions in which they live. These men sat apart from the head-man and myself. Their conversation seemed to be, as I could at times catch the drift of it, a discussion of the claims of the several individuals as to whom should be awarded the honors due to the most daring hunter in the fight with Bruin. But before this point was settled, some one of the party proposed a game of Loo, which proposition meeting with decided approval, a table was soon arranged; and seated around it, with a bottle of whisky and a single glass in the centre, were the six bear-hunters or rafters, deeply engaged in a game of *picayune loo.*

My new friend, whose name was King, declined to join the party, some of whom I recognized as the same I had seen at Mrs. Black's; and they were, as ever, quiet and well-behaved, although they indulged freely in the *ardents.*

About ten o'clock, King called in the woman of the house, and asked her which room she had prepared for the stranger. A bedroom adjoining the sitting-room was pointed out, and my young friend then said,—

"Whenever you wish to retire, I'll turn these fellows out of the room."

I assured him they would not disturb me in the least; but he added,—

"They'll play all night, and you will get no sleep."

He then walked up to the party, and told them they must go out upon the piazza; the storm had settled into a steady rain, and the night was a dark and dreary one. The men looked up at King, and a slight murmur, in which I could only distinguish the word "rain," arose from one of them. King at once replied,—

"Stranger is going to retire—and you must move." At the same time he laid his hand upon the table.

The men rose, and without further parley carried their table out upon the open piazza. One of them went for a lantern, and as he returned with it, I perceived he had replenished their bottle. King then bade me good-night and retired as well as myself. Whenever I happened to awake during the night, I could hear the distant sound of voices above the pattering of the rain; but I believe there was no quarrelling. I was up and dressed by the first light of day, as I purposed riding ten miles to breakfast, at a house that King had recommended to me. I ordered the horses, and when I walked out upon the piazza, the light was still burning in the lantern upon the table, and the players were just settling up scores.

The rain was still falling in unfrequent drops, though the clouds were breaking up and the promise was of a fair day. I mounted and rode away, not having seen King, who was probably still asleep. As I rode on, the sun rose bright, and the morning was charming just in proportion as the road which led through a rich river-bottom-land was abominably bad.

I was detained one hour at the breakfast house, but was restored to good temper by an excellent meal. Again pushing on, we dismounted at the broken bridge, and led our horses over this time without accident. I reached Strong's at sunset, and found the Captain and G—— just arrived. We had a most joyous greeting, and I promised them a royal grouse-feast. George, who had served two years in Nashville under a pastry-cook, was a capital hand on such an occasion as this. I directed him to have half a dozen of the grouse prepared; to take off the entire breast of each, which he was to roast before a quick fire. The breast of this grouse is extremely long, broad, and full for the size of the bird, and is at this season, while still feeding solely on the grass-seeds, juicy and of delicate flavor; but the back, the sides, and the legs are skinny and hard. Each of my friends had brought in his saddle-bag a bottle of sherry. Our table was set in a side parlor, and George brought on three of the breasts, done to a turn. These were discussed with a bottle of wine and pronounced perfect.

George returned in the nick of time with three more grouse, (for I regard the nobly developed breast of this bird as the only edible portion,) which proved equal to the first, and were equally appreciated. A bumper of wine and a good cigar wound up an evening highly enjoyed by my two truly valued friends, as well as myself. On the second day at noon we reached Memphis. I had brought with me fifteen grouse in perfect condition, which I distributed among my friends. Long shall I cherish the memory of this pleasant visit to Mrs. Black's Half-way House on the *Big Prairie* of Arkansas. Adieu.

BROWNSPORT, Perry County, September 3, 1835.

DEAR SIR:—I received this morning, on my return to this place, your communications of the 15th, 17th, and 20th of last month, with their several enclosures, which will receive my immediate attention. The letter from Mr. Harris of Lake Providence, taken in connection with the other information which I have received upon the same subject in reference to the incendiary measures employed to foment an insurrectionary spirit among the blacks, I deem to be so important as to require my return without delay to Headquarters, where I shall take such precautionary measures as the case demands and as the means confided to me will admit of. I shall accordingly set forward for Memphis to-morrow morning, and see you a day or two after this letter reaches you. I shall ride to Jackson, and there take the stage. The health of Mrs. Gaines is much improved. She will remain [at the Springs—*G. A. M.*] some weeks longer. She and Edmund unite with me in good wishes, and prayers for your health and happiness. EDMUND P. GAINES.

MEMPHIS, October 20, 1835.

My attention has been bent strictly upon my work, since my return from Arkansas, in order to bring up the lee-way made during my absence. The only recreation I allow myself, is an hour's gallop every afternoon from four to five. A few evenings since, I was going to intersect the Nashville road a mile or two in advance by a woods-road that crosses the Bayou Guyoso a short distance above where it falls into Wolf River, which in turn empties its waters into the Mississippi just above the town.

The Guyoso, an inconsiderable spring-branch at low-water or at ordinary times, becomes a torrent when heavy rains flood the lands which it drains, and it has cut its way through a ridge below the bridge on the Nashville road, making a ravine fifteen or eighteen feet deep. Over this gulf has been thrown a bridge one hundred feet long; it rises from the abutment to a centre pier at least eight feet, and at once descends again at the same grade to the opposite abutment, like the roof of a house, but is not wide enough for two carriages or wagons to pass each other on its floor. Neither a horseman nor the driver of a vehicle can discern, as he enters upon the bridge, another vehicle entering upon the bridge at the same time upon the opposite end. Such was precisely the case with respect to myself on the occasion I refer to. I entered upon the bridge and walked my horse up the steep without dreaming of meeting anything, as the road is but little used. It was not till I came near the summit that I discovered an ox-cart with a negro driver, meeting me. We were not twenty feet apart. I said to myself, "A horseman certainly can pass that cart;" and so he might nine times out of ten, ordinarily; but it curiously enough happened that just as I came to the centre panel on the left where there seemed to be more room, and which side I had in consequence taken, I discovered that the rail of that panel (the only one on the bridge that was so) was unmistakably *off and gone*. Still there was plenty of room for my horse to pass, and a hundred to one he would safely pass. My horse and the oxen met directly opposite the middle of this open panel, and singularly coincident it was that at this very moment the ox next to me threw his head around to the right to brush a fly or something of the kind from his shoulder, when the point of his long horn gave Redbird a good punch in the shoulder; it was a violent shock to the irritable temperament of my spirited steed. He reared and at the same time whirled from the ox, and as he faced outward, I perceived to my horror that his fore-feet extended beyond the edge of the bridge. Oh! how wonderful is the action of the human mind at such a time. I clearly saw, that, whichever way I might attempt to rein him, his fore-feet could not be brought back upon the bridge, and that we must turn a somerset together of at least eighteen or twenty feet perpendicular height. I as clearly saw, that my only chance was to leap him from the bridge. All this passed through my mind as distinctly as I now write it; the resolve was as decidedly made and put in action like one flash of light. While the horse was thus in the air, I drove my spurs into his flanks with all my might. His lunge was tremendous, and we alighted, *all right*, full twenty feet from the foot of the pier off the top of which we came. We alighted just at the edge of the water in stiff mud, into which Redbird sunk up to the knees, and there he stood unable to move a peg. He had lighted in the clayey bottom from his eighteen or twenty feet flight through the air like a bird, and I assure you did not even jar me in the saddle. Had it been stony or hard ground, it would have been very different. As Redbird did not stir, I turned in the saddle to take a look at where I had come from. There I saw the negro driver standing on the edge of the bridge, holding up in his hand a *horse-shoe*. He exclaimed, —

"Lor' bress you, Massa! your horse jump clean out of his shoes."

My horse had, indeed, thrown off one of his hind shoes as I launched him off the bridge. By this time I thought it was well to see whether Redbird had any legs left; so I moved him with the spur, saying, "You brought me here on your back, you must take me out on your back." He took it very quietly—first working his left fore-leg until he got it loose, then the right in the same manner: this took about two minutes, after which he succeeded in drawing these limbs out clear, when he threw himself forward and plunged and scrambled till he drew his hind-legs after him. This much accomplished, of course he did not sink so much again. And after a good struggle he brought me to *terra firma* once more. I was rejoiced to find that he was not strained, or in any way injured by his adventure. So I finished my ride without dismounting.

I don't think I have ever referred in my letters to the "Buffalo-gnat," a little fellow about half the size of a house-fly, with a great hump upon his back, and as much like the great American Bison or Buffalo as a creature so minute could bear close resemblance to one so gigantic and *outré;* indeed the likeness is so striking as to be absolutely ludicrous. But diminutive as he is, his power to destroy is fearful. When first I came here, I heard the almost incredible fact, that the year previous forty-two horses had been thrown over the bluff into the Mississippi in two consecutive days, killed by the poisonous bite of this gnat. The truth of this assertion is substantiated by the whole population of the town, and there can be no doubt about it. The pestiferous little monster, I am under the impression, attacks horses only; I have never heard of its troubling other beasts, or man, either white or black. The points of the quadrupeds it assails are the lips and nostrils occasionally; but chiefly the thin skin unprotected by the hairy coat, on the lower and after part of the body. Where these parts are left unprotected, the gnats crowd upon them, and the poison of their bite is so acrid that death ensues in a few hours. By rubbing the horse's flanks and exposed parts with fish-oil, or a strong decoction of walnut-leaves, the gnats may be kept off, if not numerous and not very eager and vehement. There are a few here every summer, but they are deterred from lighting upon a horse by the precautions I have made reference to. I have sometimes seen one or two flying round the head of my horse while riding out, but I have never had a horse bitten by one.

In August last it was reported that a boat-load of horses had been landed above the mouth of Wolf River, and that all or nearly all had been killed before the next morning. In order to satisfy myself of the truth of the report, I walked down to the mouth of Wolf River, got a boat, and crossed over. Right by the mouth of the river I found a very respectable man and his son encamped. The man told me that he had left Louisville in a flat-boat with twelve valuable, blooded horses for the New Orleans market; that, arriving here on Saturday evening, he landed his horses, in order to lie by on Sunday. He knew nothing about the gnat; that his horses were attacked on Sunday without his being aware of it; and that by Monday morning, (the day I was with him,) when he arose, to his astonishment, eleven of his horses were dead or dying. There was a fine gray hitched near the fire, the only one, he said, left to him. I walked round among the trees, and counted, within fifty yards of the tent, the eleven fine horses lying dead. It was a sad sight, and a heavy loss to the owner.* Adieu.

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* In the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, in May last, I think, I saw the following extract from a Memphis paper: —

"MEMPHIS, April 22, 1867. The Buffalo-gnats are destroying the stock along the river. One planter, near Commerce, lost fifty head last week."

The writer does not say what the stock was, though, from the num-

[NOTE.

On board the Steamer MISSISSIPPI, January 28, 1836

Suddenly at this time, the massacre of Major Dade's command in Florida by the Seminole Indians, on the 25th of December last, startled the whole country. The steamer which brought this intelligence from New Orleans to Memphis, also brought us information that General Gaines, who happened just then to be making an inspection of the Southern forts, had called upon the Governor of Louisiana for a regiment of volunteers, with which, and the garrisons of the several military posts on the immediate seaboard, consisting of artillery of the regular army, he was about to sail for the theatre of this sad catastrophe. I got upon the first steamer, the *Mississippi*, downward bound, anxious to join the expedition which was to carry me back to scenery in that land which nature seemed to have modelled as the paradise of the red man and his offspring, the children of the forest, — scenery which had so often in former days been stamped upon my memory with associations of the most agreeable character, — lovely scenery, which, alas! had already become the theatre of conflict and bloodshed!]

[EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS DATED FEB. 1 AND 9, AND APRIL 10, 1836.]

NEW ORLEANS, February 1, 1836.

MY DEAR FATHER: — I joined the General here this afternoon, and as I may not again have time to write before we sail, I snatch a few moments to give you the news in this quarter. The papers have doubtless given you the accounts of Indian hostilities in Florida. Since the attack on Dade's command, General Clinch has had a handsome fight with them near Fort King. With two hundred men he was engaged about one hour with five hundred Indians, and at length drove them from the swamp with

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ber, it is probable the greater part were horned cattle, and that would show that horses are not the only sufferers, — although I never heard, while at Memphis, of other animals being attacked.

loss. The militia from the upper part of Florida and Georgia had returned home as soon as the excursion on which they started began to assume a business-like aspect.

We sail for Fort Brooke (Tampa Bay) on the morning of the 3d instant, with two hundred of the 4th Regiment of Infantry, and about five hundred volunteers from this place. At Fort Brooke there are about two hundred men, with which reinforcement the General will proceed to Fort King, one hundred and thirty miles north, and effect a junction with Clinch; thence to bring the Seminoles to a reckoning.

To-morrow will be a busy day, preparing to embark on the following, but I will write to you from Tampa.

FORT BROOKE, Tampa Bay,
Feb. 9, 1836.

MY DEAR FATHER: — We arrived here this afternoon after a pleasant passage, though a little rough. I was the only one, I believe, of the General's staff who was not sea-sick.

We found Major Mountfort, whom you have seen, shut up in pickets, where he has been confined for some weeks. We have now encamped around him four hundred and fifty regulars and about six hundred volunteers. In addition to which force we have about one hundred friendly Indians, many of whom are old acquaintances of mine. A small party of them had a brush with a detachment of the enemy yesterday, a few miles from the pickets. It is not known in what force they are in our neighborhood; but we shall be prepared to take the field by to-morrow evening, and the current opinion, particularly among the volunteers, is, that we will bring the campaign to a speedy close. Yet it is much to be apprehended that the Seminoles will retreat to the lower part of the peninsula, and cause the troops much fatigue to bring them to bay.

I, who have known the Seminoles, well and fully appreciate their character as a warlike people, whose spirit and temper is easily read in their proud and independent bearing, have predicted, wildly you will say, *a seven years' war*. But I know enough of the country in the lower part of the peninsula, to which of course they will retire when we push them vigorously, to fully comprehend the difficulties that await the white man when he follows the savage into the almost inaccessible "*Big Cypress Swamp*," which, if accessible, is impenetrable and impassable to the soldier who is encumbered with an accumulation of *impedimenta*, from which the naked Indian is as free as the wolf. The knowledge I possess of this country I obtained from several Indians, especially from Jumper, who had hunted there regularly for many winters at the time I served in Florida formerly. These men always came in here to dispose of their peltry to the sutler of the regiment; whereas they previously were obliged to pack them on their horses across the country to St. Augustine. Jumper is one of the most intelligent men of the nation, and I have no doubt that his description of the country, given at a time when no apprehension of war with the United States was entertained, may be fully relied upon. This country, he stated, absolutely abounded in game of every description, and that the "*koonta*," a very good species of the arrow-root, grew plenteously everywhere. Thus the Indians may live and grow fat on the borders of the "Big Cypress," and when the troops invade the country that environs the Great Swamp, which covers an immense region, reaching from shore to shore, they have only to step into the water and at once place a formidable barrier between the enemy and their retreat. I am called to attend to the issue to the friendly Indians of such arms and ammunition as they may require. Adieu.

NEW ORLEANS, March 20, 1836.

MY DEAR FATHER: — My letter from Fort Drane has already informed you of the General's having left the seat of war in Florida, to assume command on the Texas frontier. On our ride through the country to Tallahassee, the inhabitants manifested the most lively feelings of admiration of the old hero's conduct,—a very striking contrast to the sentiments that Scott has been so unfortunate as to call forth in that section of the country, where he has managed to render himself exceedingly unpopular. . . . .

At Tallahassee the General took the stage to Pensacola. I proceeded to St. Mark's, and there embarked for Tampa Bay, where some duties required me to be present.

Santa Ana has had some success of late in Texas; and to keep a proper eye on our interests on that border, Gen. G. may be detained there some time; but I shall be better able to give you an idea of what will be our movements when I reach that point.

On board Steamer AMERICA.
Mississippi River, April 23, 1836.

MY DEAR FATHER:—On the morning after I wrote to you at Natchitochez (in March last), I succeeded in purchasing a steed—a fine high-spirited Texan horse—and at an early hour set out to join the General, who, as I learned, had marched from Fort Jessup (twenty-five miles hence) for the Sabine River, the boundary between our territory and Texas, now occupied by Santa Ana and his Mexican forces, numbering some six or seven thousand, as report declares, though, like other flying rumors, probably greatly amplified. Having stopped an hour at Fort Jessup to lunch and bait my horse, I mounted again and reached the Sabine, twenty-five miles further, before "*Retreat-beating*" at sunset. The country I passed through was wild, but otherwise uninteresting. I found the General encamped with the troops; and having called on the Quartermaster for a tent, I had it pitched near the General; and before night had fairly set in, I was well established. A day or two after my arrival we had a visit from General Samuel Houston, of Texas notoriety, still lame from his wound in the ankle, received at the battle of San Jacinto, where he defeated the Mexicans under Santa Ana. His Excellency, Santa Ana himself, was taken prisoner the following day by a Kentucky soldier-boy of sixteen, who, while on a hunting-ramble, met a Mexican on foot, unarmed, muddy, and exhausted, wandering on the edge of a swamp, about a mile from Houston's camp. The youth raised his rifle as the other was about to retire hastily from this unexpected and unwelcome meeting, and ordering him to "*stand*," immediately faced him to the rightabout, marched him into camp, little dreaming who it was he had captured. In this way the President of Mexico was conducted through the Texan *bivouac* to Houston's tent, where Almonte, who had previously been taken, was standing in conversation with the Texan hero. The Kentucky boy marched his prisoner up to his General, and was beginning to tell his story, when Almonte turned round, and suddenly uttering an exclamation of surprise and anguish, sprang forward and embraced his chief. I was told that "*Old Sam*," as he is called, maintained, on this occasion, the dignity due to his rank and station. He received Santa Ana quietly and without exhibiting the slightest exultation at finding this distinguished personage delivered into his hands so opportunely. It may seem singular that the President of Mexico and General-in-Chief of the army in the field should have been caught in such woful plight. But when the Texans charged the little breastwork which the Mexicans had erected with the packs and pack-saddles of the army, their cry was, "*Remember Fanning*" (who had been cruelly put to death by Santa Ana), and their onset, fearfully impetuous, carried them without pause over the breastwork, when, having discharged their rifles, they brained the terror-stricken Mexicans with the butts of their guns. (One of Houston's staff told me that he saw, close at his side, a tall Tennesseean break the stock of his rifle over the head of his first opponent, and then seizing the long heavy barrel by the muzzle, he slew them right and left like sheep.) The terrific yells and shouts of the maddened Texans carried fear to the hearts of their enemy; and the pervading sentiment among the defeated and disorganized "*Greasers*" was, "*sauve qui peut.*" In this general rush, Santa Ana becoming separated from his staff, had lost his horse in attempting to force him through a swamp, where he afterwards remained concealed during the night, and had just ventured out when captured.

Nothing further of interest occurred during the time that I remained with the General; and my time being fully or wholly engrossed with my bureau duties, I did not find an hour when I was not too completely worn out with writing to send you a line. On my way out to the Sabine, the road for many miles, before I reached the river, was literally lined with families fleeing from Texas. Most of them had left their all behind, a prey to the lawless of their own land, who did not fail to get the start of their enemies, and thus profit by the opportunities which a general panic afforded them. I constantly met women and children on foot, the images of suffering and despondency. The reports, however, of the approach of the Mexican forces, accompanied by large bodies of Indians, afterwards proved unfounded, and the inhabitants of the town of Nacogdochez, after a few days, were seen passing our camp in numbers, returning to their homes. Our troops are encamped half a mile from the river; and exaggerated reports of their strength having been wafted across the Rubicon, will probably deter the savages, if indeed they have been mustered in any force, from acts of hostility on our frontier people, until the militia or volunteers called for from the adjacent States arrive, and place the General at the head of a little army, equal in numbers to what has been represented. In the meantime, as the machinery of my office had got rather out of gear during my absence in Florida, and as no movement is likely to take place for a fortnight, I have taken advantage of the lull to run on to Memphis, and get some documents I require. This boat goes no further than Natchez, where we shall be in an hour, but there is a fine steamer in sight coming up and may overtake us. Upon her I shall jump and continue my voyage. I shall be detained but a couple of days, and returning with such books and papers as may be required, I hope to rejoin the General in a week or ten days. How long we may be detained on the Sabine, or in that region, it is impossible to say; but I may be able to enlighten you further on my return to camp. Adieu.

CAMP ON THE SABINE RIVER, May 1, 1836.

MY DEAR FATHER: — When the news of Dade's massacre reached me at Memphis, I stepped on board the first downward bound steamer on my way to New Orleans, as already remarked, and reached there in time to sail with the troops. On our arrival at Fort Brooke, Tampa Bay, it was ascertained that the garrison, consisting of two companies of United States artillery, had had no communication with General Clinch, commanding at Fort King, the old Indian Agency, since the 25th December, 1835, the day on which Major Dade's command had marched from Fort Brooke. This detachment consisted of one company of the 2d Regiment United States Artillery, and one company of the 3d Regiment. The officers were Captain G. W. Gardiner and Lieutenants W. E. Bassinger and R. Henderson of the 2d Regiment; and Captain U. S. Frazer and Lieuts. R. R. Mudge and J. L. Keais of the 2d Regiment,—in all numbering one hundred and eight men; and were to have been commanded by Captain Gardiner. The wife of this officer, however, was quite ill at the time; and Bt. Major Dade, whose company formed part of the garrison, generously volunteered to take command of the detachment, and insisted on Captain Gardiner's remaining to take care of his wife. It was, indeed, so arranged; Captain Gardiner, after much resistance, yielding to the solicitations of his friends. In the meantime, the master of a small vessel lying at the dock had agreed with a gentleman at the Fort to take himself and wife to Key West; and Mrs. Gardiner having expressed great desire to accompany this lady, it was at last decided by her husband that she should accompany her friends to Key West, and thence sail for New York or some other Northern port. Although very low, she was carried on board, and departed with her friends the same day. Nothing now remained to detain Captain Gardiner, and he made known his determination to accompany his command; but as Dade had volunteered to go in his stead, he offered to serve under the Major, if the latter still proposed to accompany them. It was thus that Dade fell into association and command of this most unfortunate but truly gallant little party, of whom "*the whole command, save three, fell without an attempt to retreat:*" as stated in the official notice of the affair, by the Adjutant-General of the Army at Washington. As already stated, this devoted little band marched on Christmas day, and moved forward about ten miles to the Little Hillsborough, where they made their bivouac. Some hours after nightfall, a party of Indians, some forty or fifty apparently in numbers, were heard shouting their war-whoop, and singing war-songs. This was unmistakable evidence of their determination to fight, if an attempt to remove them by force, which had been threatened by the Agent, Mr. Thompson, should be made; and they correctly construed the advance of this force in the direction of the Agency at Fort King, to reinforce that garrison, as the first move towards carrying that threat into effect. And now, *par parenthese*, let me say, what I cannot refrain from, namely, that this outbreak of the Seminoles, which I predict will prove to be a *seven years' war*, and cost us fifty millions of dollars, has been brought about either by huge blundering, or by unfair dealings on the part of Government agents. The *Treaty of Payne's Landing* (on the Saint John's River, made with these Indians by Colonel Gadsden, Special Agent of the Government some two years ago) was an agreement to this effect: that the Seminoles should send a delegation of seven chiefs to the west of Arkansas, and beyond the Cherokee Reserve, to examine the country with respect to the character of the soil, the water, the salubrity of the climate, the game, and so forth; that, upon the return of the delegates, the Seminole nation should be called together in council to hear their report, and take into consideration the proposition laid before them by Colonel Gadsden, to give up their Florida possessions, and remove to the West, in consideration of certain inducements offered by the United States. In furtherance of this agreement, the chiefs designated set out to visit the country referred to. On their arrival at Fort Gibson, General Arbuckle, commanding that post, sent guides with them, and they passed some weeks in a thorough exploration of the country. On their return, General Arbuckle by some means, but under what instructions I know not, induced these chiefs to sign a treaty accepting the lands shown them, and ceding their Florida lands. In due time the delegation reached home, and a council was called: the report was made; but it was not unanimous, some of the chiefs pronouncing the country they had visited, in every respect less desirable than their native land. In fine, it was decided in council, by a large majority, to decline the offer made by the United States. Soon after this, Thompson, the Agent, sent for Micanopy who had succeeded to the chieftainship on the death of Tuko-see-mathla, or John Hicks, and told him he must prepare his people to be moved by a certain day, as ships had been ordered to be at Tampa at the time stated to transport the Indians to New Orleans. Micanopy then for the first time made known to the Agent the decision of the nation in council assembled. This news was received by Thompson with great surprise and amazement. He told the chief that he must go home and sleep upon what he had been told, and that he must return in the morning and bring a better talk. Micanopy quietly retired; — he returned the next morning, when Thompson directed Abraham, — a negro, once a slave of Dr. Sierra of Pensacola, but for many years past claiming to belong to Micanopy, and now his interpreter, — to ask the chief what he had to say in reply to the Agent's order to prepare his people to embark at an early day at Tampa Bay.

The question was put, and the answer returned by Abraham in these words: "The old man says to-day the same he said yesterday, '*that the nation had decided in council to decline the offer of the United States Government.*'" These are the very words as reported to me by Major William A. Graham, who was present at the interview. This negro, Abraham, exercised a wonderful influence over his master; he was a very shrewd fellow, quick and intelligent, but crafty and artful in the extreme. For a negro, he had a remarkably high and broad forehead; but an awful cast in his right eye, which gave to his gentle, insinuating manner a very sinister effect. I doubt not that he had on this occasion, as usual, much to do in keeping the chief, who was of a vacillating character, steady in his purpose.

Thompson repeated his threat, that, if the Indians were not ready to embark at the time appointed, the troops would be called out. It was in compliance with his requisition made soon afterwards, that the detachment, the command of which had accidentally devolved upon Major Dade, marched to reinforce the garrison of Fort King. Such was the state of affairs on the 25th of December. The following are the facts I have been enabled to collect from the most reliable sources. On that night, as I have stated, and on the two nights following, the Indians hung about the *bivouac* of the troops, whooping and occasionally firing their rifles, evincing in every way a highly exasperated state of feeling. At daybreak on the morning of the 28th, a very large proportion of the warriors of the nation had assembled at the point where the trail from Okahumpy, Micanopy's town, intersects the military road; and here it was proposed to attack the troops before they united with those at Fort King. Micanopy was undecided, until he was plainly told, as the troops appeared in sight, he must declare whether he was with them or against them. This he clearly understood was the question of life or death to himself, and he replied, "I will show you;" and with that he took his position behind a pine-tree about thirty yards from the road. The rest of the Indians laid down in the high savannah grass with which the spot was covered, although the ground at this time was dry. The troops had an advance-guard of an officer and eight men, who were full two hundred yards in advance of the main body. Dade was the only officer who was mounted, and he was riding at the time by the side of Captain Frazer, who was in command of the advance-guard. Unsuspecting and too confident, notwithstanding the warning they had received, the party moved on. When the Major arrived opposite to where Micanopy had taken his stand, the chief raised his rifle, took deliberate aim at him and fired. Dade fell dead from his horse, shot probably through the heart, as I should judge from the bullet-hole in his side, which I saw when General Gaines and his little band reached the battle-ground about two months afterwards. The body was stripped of coat and shirt, and although the flesh had shrunk, the skin was sound and as hard as parchment; this was the case with all. But to resume my narrative, as received from private Clark (now with us), one of the three wounded men who escaped, and after incredible toil and suffering succeeded in reaching Fort Brooke. When Dade fell, the Indians who lay concealed in the tall grass rose, and with one volley laid low Captain Frazer and his eight men. They had, evidently, all been shot dead,—not a man had moved from the place where he fell, as they lay just in rear of the Major, each man occupying the position in which he had marched. The first intimation that Captain Gardiner and his command received of the extent of the disaster was the sight of Dade's horse running back riderless. The gallant Gardiner had scarcely time to put his command into line and unlumber his six-pounder gun, before he received the fire of the enemy, who advancing rapidly, was still concealed. The fire of the Indians was returned with effect, although the latter were widely extended, covering a semicircle whose radius was the range of their rifles, and were concentrating their fire upon our troops; the discharges of canister-shot from the fieldpiece were directed to different quarters, as found necessary. After about an hour's fighting, the Indians withdrew. They held a council at a short distance from the position occupied by our devoted band, as their voices could be distinctly heard as the chiefs addressed their warriors; and an hour passed before they came to the decision to renew the attack. This enabled Gardiner to throw up a log breastwork of the pine-trees growing on the ground where his men fell.

Meantime a small party was sent forward to the advance to bring in the wounded, or to render such assistance as might be required; but the sad tale was soon told: the two gallant and valuable officers and the eight men had fallen in the service of their country, to rise no more till time should cease to roll on. The Indians now advanced to the second attack more fiercely than before; the woods rang with their war-whoops; and the crack of their rifles was as one incessant peal of sharp ringing bells, to which the loud reports of musketry and the booming of the artillery formed a fitting though fearful accompaniment. The Seminoles constantly closed in upon our brave fellows, who were as one to twenty of their enemies (the Indians being, as since ascertained, about two thousand strong). The proof how well our men fought, was seen by us in the dozens of musket-balls crowded into single trees on the sides that faced the little breastwork not over three to four feet high. These shot had been fired at particular Indians who fought from behind these trees. On the other hand, the logs composing the breastwork, none of which were over eight inches at the butt, were filled on every side of the exterior with rifle-bullets of small size. I carefully examined our poor dear fellows, both officers and men, as they lay within the little fort, in posture either kneeling or extended on their breasts, the head in very many instances lying upon the upper log of their breastwork; and I invariably found the bullet-mark in the forehead or the front of the neck. The picture of those brave men lying thus in their "sky-blue" clothing, which had scarcely faded, was such as can never be effaced from my memory. As I have said in the case of Major Dade, the flesh had shrunk, but the skin remained whole, dried, smooth, and hard; the hair and beard remained; and the officers were all, I believe, recognized by those who knew them well. I readily recognized those with whom I had been personally acquainted, — they were only two, Dade and Gardiner. The former was one of the senior captains of my regiment when I joined it; the latter had command of the company of bombardiers, sappers and miners at West Point, when I was admitted to the Military Academy as a cadet. Gardiner himself was a graduate of that institution. There were but three or four of the men that had fallen backwards into the interior of the little work; the rest lay as regularly at right angles to one or other of the three faces of their little fort, the head lying on the top log, as I have said, or immediately below it, as if they had been toy-soldiers arranged by a child in his sport. Gardiner lay near the centre of the enclosure, where he had doubtless stood to overlook the scene and direct what should be done. In the beginning, or rather when the Indians retired from the first attack, he could not retreat without leaving his wounded to the tender mercy of the savages, which must be interpreted into being left to be tortured by the fiendlike foe. His noble spirit could not entertain such a thought, and his men catching enthusiasm from his gallant bearing, fought till their ammunition was exhausted, or until not a man was left to fire the last charge of powder and lead that remained to them. A nobler instance of self-devotion is not on record in the history of wars, ancient or modern.

This narration I received from Clark, who was with General Gaines on this occasion. He had received three wounds, when the fire of the troops ceased entirely, and the Indians entered the little fort and dispatched with their knives some few in whom a ray of life still glimmered, he (Clark) feigning death, lay still until the savages had exhausted their diabolical spirit in wreaking vengeance on all in whom life still lingered; then, as darkness cast its pall over the scene of cruel, unequal conflict, he ventured out; and with bleeding and unstanched wounds he crawled onward, with one knee on the ground, from which he was unable to raise it, and following the military road, in this condition at last reached Fort Brooke on the third day after the battle. His sufferings from hunger and thirst, as well as from his wounds and from the laborious mode of travelling his wounds compelled him to adopt, are almost incredible. But he related them to me in a quiet, simple way that would have carried conviction of his truthfulness to the most skeptical listener.

In addition to this, on our arrival at Fort King, I found, among a few Indians and negroes that had come in to that post, and given themselves up as loyal subjects of the United States Government, an old acquaintance in a negro, named *August*, whom I had known well in former days. He had always proved himself an honest, truthful fellow. I had several conversations with him, and he corroborated Clark's account in every particular. He told me that he was present on the battle-ground, but did not enter into the fight. He said, moreover, that when the fire of the soldiers ceased entirely, the Indians advanced to the breast-work and entered it; he went forward with them. As they entered the little fort, a young officer, the only man of the whole command who was not killed or desperately wounded, came forward to meet them; he was a very handsome young man, dressed in a blue frock-coat. As the Indians came in, he advanced towards them and offered his sword; but the man he offered it to was the very worst Indian in the nation, and he drew up his rifle and shot the young officer dead. As August said this, his voice grew a little husky, and he continued,—

"When I saw that handsome young officer fall, the tears came into my eyes, and I cried like a child."

From August's description of the personal appearance of this officer, the officers present with us at Fort King, who knew the younger officers of Dade's command, were satisfied that it was Bassinger, who had thus early terminated a career which promised to be one of distinction as a military man, and of usefulness as a citizen of our common country.

I must now go back to bring up another branch of the sad narrative, which is necessary to the right understanding of this eventful war.

The Governor of Louisiana having, in compliance with the requisition of General Gaines, called out a regiment of volunteers, under the command of Colonel Persifer F. Smith, for service in Florida, they embarked at once with part of the 4th Infantry, in a Brig; and two companies of artillery armed as infantry, (the garrisons of Fort Pike and Fort Wood,) and the remainder of the 4th Infantry, were put on board the little steamer *Florida*. On my arrival in New Orleans, on reporting to the General, he informed me that he had taken into his military family Captain Ethan Allen Hitchcock, who happened to be in the city, and who was acting as Assistant Adjutant-General; but, added he, "You will now resume your duties in that office, and I will appoint Hitchcock to the duties of Inspector-General."

All things now being in readiness, the General and his staff went on board the *Florida*, and we, in company, sailed for Pensacola, where it would be necessary to replenish our supply of wood and water, and fresh provisions. On our arrival at this port, the General found in the newspaper a copy of a General Order, assigning General Scott to the command of the troops in Florida who were to operate against the Seminole Indians. This was, as may well be supposed, a matter of surprise to the General; for the Territory of Florida was divided by a north and south line, the western portion being comprised within the district commanded by General Gaines; the eastern in that of General Scott. As the war broke out in General Gaines' district, and no orders from Washington had reached him, he, with the spirit and promptness of a true soldier, at once took command in person of his available forces, and proceeded to the scene of action. General Scott had not yet left New York; the troops with Gaines, and especially the senior officers, were desirous that he should accompany them; and the condition of affairs in Florida being unknown, altogether decided him to proceed with his command at least to Tampa Bay, where he could learn something further. With this view we put to sea again as soon as the necessary supplies were on board. As we entered the mouth of Tampa Bay, he directed me to address, in his name, a letter to General Scott, offering to him three distinct propositions: first, stating his willingness to turn over to Scott the troops, consisting of eleven hundred men, which he had brought from New Orleans, and to leave the conduct of the war entirely to Scott; second, if Scott preferred to leave the country, that he (Gaines) would take upon himself the prosecution of the campaign; and third, that they should at the same time commence operations on opposite sides of the peninsula, move simultaneously towards the centre, and let the only strife be, who should render the better service to the country. This letter I wrote and handed to the General for his signature, which was duly affixed; and the letter was left in my possession, with instructions to have it forwarded by the earliest opportunity after we had landed. The next day we landed, and learned from the commanding officer at Fort Brooke, that no intelligence of any nature or from any source had been received of the state of affairs at Fort King, where General Clinch was with a small force; it being doubtful whether he had been attacked by the Indians or not.

Under these circumstances, Gaines felt it incumbent on him to proceed to Fort King, as Clinch might be beleaguered, in want, and unable to send for supplies and support. It was decided to move the next morning at daylight. Meantime the troops were organized into a "*Light Brigade*," the 4th Regulars, Br. Lieut.-Colonel W. S. Foster commanding; the Louisiana Volunteers, Colonel P. F. Smith commanding; and a battalion of 3d Artillery armed as infantry, Brevet-Major F. S. Belton commanding. The brigade was under command of Lieutenant-Colonel D. E. Twiggs, 4th Infantry; 1st Lieutenant I. F. Izard, 1st Dragoons, Acting Assistant Adjutant-General; Captain S. Shannon, Brigade Quartermaster. Twelve horses only were brought from New Orleans with the brigade; these I was directed by the General, after consultation with Captain Shannon, to distribute as equally as possible to the officers commanding regiments, &c., as pack-horses for the transportation of their baggage and subsistence. In the discharge of this delicate duty, I was obliged, in regard to strict and impartial justice, to assign a single horse for the service of the General and his staff. This important piece of information I communicated to the General as we sat at dinner, and I was complimented for having *so strictly* discharged my duty. At the same time the General read us a small lecture on the stern necessity of always, at the commencement of a campaign, reducing the *impedementa* to the lowest mark practicable. Hitchcock and myself at once expressed our readiness to march with one shirt, one pair of drawers, and one pair of stockings, besides those we had upon our precious persons. This refinement of self-denial on the part of his staff so delighted the General, who is always ready to share the hardships, dangers, and privations of a march with the private soldier, that he smiled blandly and benevolently, as he sipped a glass of champaign, with a bottle of which he had treated the mess on this occasion, and said,—

"Gentlemen, you have acted so entirely in accordance with my own approved views, that I think we may indulge ourselves with a little luxury, say one bottle apiece for the campaign!"

Now you must be informed, if you do not already know it, that the General is a strictly temperance man, (I do not mean a teetotaler,) not only from principle but by nature; and this indulgence of his was an unmistakable proof of his approval of our decision just expressed. As he had appointed myself to carry the purse from which all expenditures of this kind should be made, for, with the generosity which marked his life, he insisted on bearing all the expenses of his mess, I said, "Well, General, what shall *your* bottle be?"

He replied, in a slightly suppressed voice,—"A bottle of porter."

To stand this announcement unmoved was a painful trial of forbearance, although I knew the General's *penchant* for a glass of porter, *when he felt unwell.* I made a note, however, in my memorandum-book; and turning to Hitchcock said, "Now, Captain what will *you* take?" It evidently cost him an effort of resolution to go one step beyond the General, and he replied, "I think I'll say a bottle of wine."

Having made a note of this also, it now came to my turn to declare the dictates of my judgment as to what was fitting for the march, and I said, "General, we may meet with wild and unwholesome waters in the imperfect limestone country, and I think it will be but prudent to have with us a little corrective; therefore *I* will take a bottle of brandy."

To this no remark was made. And it is a positive fact that we marched the next morning with a bottle of porter, a bottle of wine, and a bottle of brandy as our "*canteen*," on an arduous march through the Seminole country, where they might dispute our advance at any point on a line of one hundred miles of road. I should, however, mention here, that I had succeeded in purchasing an excellent pony for the General, at a very fair cost, from a person claiming to enjoy the benefit of a residence under "the flag." Our little army had their *bivouac* under the wide-spreading live-oaks; and at daylight in the morning, every company was quickly formed by its captain; the brigade was soon in line, and filed off in high spirits upon the military road leading to Fort King. The General took his place at the head of the column on his steed, Hitchcock and myself by his side on foot; and with an advance guard and about one dozen friendly Indians in front, we commenced the march to Fort King, to release General Clinch, should he have been surrounded by a heavy force of Indians. We marched about twelve miles without the occurrence of any incident of a military character; yet I must not pass over a piece of good luck that befell myself. As the troops made a brief halt at the Big Spring, about three miles from Fort Brooke, a sub-chief joined his companions mounted on a handsome horse; as he joined his party, all of whom were on foot, I walked up to him, attracted I must confess by the appearance of his steed; and much to my surprise and pleasure recognized in his rider an old acquaintance and friend, *Tustenuggee Hajo*. On recognizing me, he exclaimed, "*Hie la! ay-it-liepts-e-chez?*" "Ah! how is your health?"

I replied, "*Hin-cla,*" "good," and we shook hands. Then pointing to his horse, I said, "*Echo-thlocko hin-cla;*" "A good horse." "*Chato kanawa nacho-ma echo-thlocko oepa-taka che-malis chez?*" "How many dollars do you want for the horse, saddle, and bridle?"

He replied, "*Chato kanawa palin-chakebin.*" "Fifty dollars."

Without further parley, I took out pen, ink, and paper, and wrote an order on the sutler at Fort Brooke to pay

Tustenuggee Hajo, on demand, fifty dollars, and charge the same to my account. I then told him to hand the paper to the sutler (*sneezer*), and get his money; he took the order, which he placed in his tobacco-pouch, and handed me the bridle of the horse. This was a mark of confidence at which the Louisiana Volunteers, many of whom were standing around, expressed their astonishment, and their incredulity, in fact, until they saw me mount the horse and ride off. He was a spirited fellow and in good plight; the saddle was a common American saddle, and not much the worse for wear. I may as well conclude the account of this transaction by stating that the chief accompanied us on our march, and did not present the note till several months afterwards, when he received his money. As I have mentioned, we marched about twelve miles to a branch of Fish Creek, an old hunting-ground of mine; and after we halted, I recollected that not far from the place where we sat with the General, I had four years agone, while on a hunting-party with two or three officers, lunched at this creek, and as we rose again to mount our horses, I took up the black bottle from which we had taken our *noon-er*, still half full of whisky, and placed it in a concealed cleft in the rocky bank, saying, "We'll find this the next time we lunch here." I related the occurrence to the General, and said, "I know the exact spot so well, that if it is still where I put it, I can easily find it." The General expressed a desire to know whether the bottle was still there, and furthermore whether I would be able to find it. I therefore rose and went down the creek to the rock, which I recognized as if I had been there but yesterday; I examined the ledge on which I had placed "Brown Bess," but she was there no more: some unusually high freshet had probably carried her down the stream, and into the world of waters that ebbed and flowed not a mile distant. The place where I had placed the bottle was one strongly marked, and I could not have mistaken it; for the locality was one that had long been familiar to me; and I only mention it because the General, who has himself the "*organ of locality*" largely developed, evidently wanted to test mine. At this moment the General's orderly arrived at the tent with the pack-horse or *sumpter*, (for Captain Shannon had brought a tent for the General without saying anything about it). This orderly, as he termed himself, had been a sergeant in the army, and in New Orleans had induced the General to hire him at high wages as *factotum*. He now led the horse up in front of the General, and with a bold assurance of manner, reported that he had arrived with every thing safe *except* the bottle of brandy, which the horse had broken by running up against a tree. The bottles had been hung on top of the pack, on the outside, but resting on a soft substance that would yield, a thick, heavy bottle would not be likely to break.

I looked at the General: he was perfectly calm and unmoved, and the man escaped even reproof. For a moment I felt disposed to break the fellow's neck, as he had broken that of the bottle, after he had sold the brandy to the volunteers, and left the neck dangling from the pack; but fortunately I had self-control enough to say nothing. The next day was passed like the first, as the Spaniard says, "*sin novedad*," until we arrived at our camp-ground. I had selected a very pretty knoll in the pine wood, near the water, when Colonel Twiggs came up and entered into conversation with the General. While this was going on, the orderly and the pack-horse came up. He addressed the General with imperturbable impudence, and reported that the horse to-day had broken the wine-bottle. At this I laughed heartily, for it was the most transparent piece of rascality that my eyes ever looked upon; yet the General did not show the slightest suspicion, nor did he apparently entertain any. I walked up to the horse and untied the remaining bottle.

"General," said I, "let me recommend to you to take your porter to-day, for if left till to-morrow, I apprehend it will meet the fate of the brandy and the wine." To this the General assented, or rather made no objection; so I managed with my knife to cut the wire and extract the cork. I then poured out a full bumper, knowing that Twiggs was a teetotaler, and handed it to the General; he with inimitable politeness begged Twiggs to take it. He of course declined; the General then smiled and finished the bumper at a draught. I offered to refill for him, but he begged me to help Hitchcock, who helped himself very moderately, and again I presented the cup to the General, but he excused himself and said,

"Will you not finish it,—I beg you to do so." There was a full bumper left, which I without further entreaty dispatched. And thus ended the history of the three bottles, on the second day of our march. On the eighth day we reached Dade's battle-ground, of which I have given you an all-sufficient description. After throwing out a strong guard around the field of battle, a portion of the men at a time were permitted to walk round the ground to examine the position our men had so nobly defended, and to ponder on the sad sights there presented to their view. At the same time a spot was selected for the burial-place of the officers, and another near by for the men. Both officers and men were with great care interred, side by side. Then the troops were formed in column of companies; and while the full band of the 4th Regiment at the head of the column played with much solemnity and expression a funeral dirge, the men, with arms reversed and with sad but stern countenances, at a slow pace, marched round the entire ground, and the funeral-rites of their brethren-in-arms were concluded. Nothing further of general interest occurred until we arrived at Fort King, at the time commanded by Colonel Ichabod B. Crane, of the 4th Artillery. Here we learned that General Clinch was at Fort Drane, twenty-two miles northward, whither a messenger was sent to announce General Gaines' arrival. Adieu.

To General Thomas Cadwalader,
Arch Street, Philadelphia.

Camp Sabine, near the Sabine River,
May 18, 1836.

My dear Sir:—A rapid change of position and almost constant occupation during the last four months have prevented, until now, my making "*the Florida War*" the subject of a letter. The first intelligence of "actual hostilities" in that section of his military department, was received by General Gaines at New Orleans, whilst on a tour of inspection to the Gulf posts. The news of the massacre of Dade's detachment had burst like a thunderclap upon the inhabitants of the great Southern emporium. On receiving the official report of the sad disaster, General Gaines immediately addressed to the Adjutant-General, at Washington, a letter, in which he urged that no time should be lost in applying to the savages on that frontier the last and obvious means of correction; at the same time declaring, from his knowledge of the Seminole Indians and the country they inhabited, his conviction, that the only sure means of speedily and effectually terminating the difficulties in that quarter would be to bring into the field an army of at least four thousand men, aided and supported by a strong naval force. Under this impression he recommended that the cavalry and parts of the 1st and 7th Regiments of Infantry be ordered to Florida, to reinforce the United States troops on the Gulf, and such volunteers from the adjoining States as the emergency may call forth. On the same day he made a requisition on the Governor of Louisiana for a regiment of riflemen or infantry;

and soon after requested of Commodore Bolton, at Pensacola, the co-operation of such naval force as he might feel authorized to order on that service.

Some days subsequent to this, the receipt of intelligence that Fort Brooke (Tampa Bay) was invested or hemmed in by the Indians and negroes, and the garrison in danger of being cut off, determined General Gaines to proceed at once to their relief with what force he might be able to collect at New Orleans. He accordingly wrote by express to General Clinch, who commanded in Florida, and was at that time at Fort King, one hundred miles north of Fort Brooke, that he (General Gaines) would be at the latter fort, on the 8th of February, with seven hundred men. General Clinch, it was understood, would have by that time a respectable force (volunteers) from Georgia and the upper counties of Florida. He was accordingly ordered, if strong enough to take the field, to march to the southward in time to effect a junction with General Gaines at or near Fort Brooke. Under these circumstances, General Gaines embarked at New Orleans on the night of the 3d of February with a brigade of about eleven hundred men—to which number his force had fortunately increased—consisting of six companies of the 4th Infantry under Lieutenant-Colonel Twiggs, and a regiment of Louisiana volunteers under command of General P. F. Smith, Adjutant-General of the State. The transports, being steamboats, were obliged to touch at Pensacola for wood; and here it was that General Gaines met the Adjutant-General's letter of the 22d of January, which purported to cover the "Order, No. 7," directing "*General Scott to repair to Florida, and take command of the troops operating against the Indians in that quarter.*" This order, No. 7, was not enclosed, nor did General Gaines see it until his arrival at Fort King sixteen days afterwards. This fact may be a matter of no great import; but, as the continuance of the movement, (from Pensacola to Tampa,) after his being notified that such an order had been issued, is one of the two prominent features of the campaign that have been very unhesitatingly criticised and condemned in some of the public prints, it may be well to examine what might have been the consequences, had he abandoned the expedition at that advanced stage of its progress.

In command of a military department, he had received, at a point far distant from the seat of Federal Government, (whence alone special or new instructions should be sent him,) the intelligence of a great and unlooked-for disaster having occurred on the extreme southern frontier of the country, occupied by the left wing of his division. He learned the melancholy news that a large white settlement had been *overrun, sacked, and burned*, and many of the inhabitants killed; the United States Agent of Indian Affairs murdered; eight valuable officers and ninety-eight brave soldiers of his division cut to pieces by an overwhelming savage foe!—and he was aware that the military forts on the borders of the Indian country, viz., Forts Brooke, King, and Drane, with the station at Key West, (*all* within his military department,) were without any other works of defence than such as a daring leader with five hundred men might, at the risk of little loss, take and destroy in a few hours—the garrisons of three of those posts being insufficient for their defence. What, then, was the duty of the commander of the department? Had he hesitated one single moment, he would, indeed, have merited the stern opprobrium of his fellow-citizens. He did not hesitate—he collected what force he could and marched immediately for the theatre of the war. On the route, and within two days' march (by steam) of the Indian border, he received a notification that General Scott had been ordered to repair from the city of Washington to Florida, "and take command of the troops *operating* against the Indians in that quarter." At the same time, he was informed that "the state of affairs west of the Mississippi might soon require his attention, if not his presence in that quarter," and he was directed to await further orders in the city of New Orleans. Had hostilities actually existed on the Louisiana frontier, and General Gaines received an order to repair thither immediately, it is difficult to say whether the historian would have approved or condemned his conduct at that stage of the game, had he obeyed the order, and, by so doing, left General Clinch, in expectation of a promised co-operation, to extricate himself as he could from any difficulty into which failure on the part of General Gaines in preconcerted movements might peradventure throw him. And without General Gaines, the volunteers, his principal force, were unwilling to proceed. Moreover, he was firmly persuaded that the instructions from the War Department, requiring him to await further orders in the city of New Orleans, were forwarded before that Department could possibly have received a detail of the circumstances which rendered the *immediate* movement to Florida not only proper but imperative. A little reflection determined him to continue the movement until the President should be apprised of all the particular circumstances attending it,—or until the officer authorized to operate in his Department should make his appearance in person in that part of the country which constituted the principal theatre of the war, or the Indians be subdued and the security of the frontier re-established.

This view of the subject is based upon a sound principle of military law, and is supported by the ablest writers of all enlightened nations whose arms have been crowned with success. Had General Gaines disregarded this principle, he well knew that he might expose to difficulty, or perhaps destruction, a body of troops expecting his co-operation, and consequently leave the citizens dwelling within that quarter of his command to the tomahawk and scalping-knife.

Was it his duty, under such circumstances, to abandon an expedition on the prosecution of which the safety of the border people possibly hung; or was it his duty to strike promptly at the enemy, if possible subdue him, or, at all events, endeavor to check his devastations, until the President should have notice of his strength, and the determined spirit with which he seemed prepared to carry on the war?

General Gaines proceeded to Tampa Bay. On his arrival at Fort Brooke, he learned that the day previous a party of about one hundred of the friendly Indians had been attacked near the Fort, and driven in by a superior force. The country occupied by the hostile tribes lying between Forts Brooke and King, no communication had been kept up between those posts since the massacre of Major Dade's command; and consequently General Gaines, on arriving at the first-named station, was unable to gather any information from which he could form even a tolerable conjecture of General Clinch's strength or movements. But relying on the co-operation of that officer, he determined, as soon as his horses could be landed, to place a sufficient garrison in the pickets, and with the remainder of his force march out to meet him.

Owing to the expense and difficulties attending the transportation of horses from New Orleans by sea, the baggage-train brought with the brigade was necessarily small; and the expectation that the requisite number to complete the train might be procured at Tampa was not realized, the horses and cattle in that vicinity having been stolen or lost during the alarm which broke up the settlement, and drove the families for protection to the Fort. Some half dozen Indian ponies were, I believe, all that the Quartermaster could procure to add to the number brought from New Orleans. The question, then, among both officers and soldiers was, not "what they might get along with?" but "what they could do without on the march?" Ten days' rations were issued to the troops, (five of which were to be carried in the haversacks,) and on the morning of the 13th the brigade took the field.

The friendly Indians, who, to the number of seventy-seven, accompanied the brigade, having reported their belief that the war-party which attacked them a few days before was not only formidable, but was probably still encamped on the Alafia River, at a point some fifteen miles from Fort Brooke, and seven from the main road to Fort King, General Gaines made a detour to the right, for the purpose of breaking up and driving before him this band of marauders. On the second day's march, however, it was ascertained that the enemy had not been on the Alafia in any strength; and the troops having received two additional rations, which had been directed to meet them by water at Warren's, proceeded on their route. On approaching the Withlacoochee, on Dade's line of march, and some thirty miles above Clinch's battle-ground, the friendly Indians expressed their firm belief that a vigorous attack would be made the following day, and urged strenuously that they might be permitted to return home, *i. e.* to Fort Brooke. This faltering on the approach of battle created some surprise, not unmingled with distrust of their fidelity. A half hour's talk, however, reassured them, and they moved on without evincing any further timidity. The expected attack, however, was not made; and the brigade arrived, without annoyance, at Dade's battle-ground, when funeral honors were paid to the gallant band, who had left on the trees around abundant proof of a field nobly contested against an overwhelming foe. The sad scene can never be erased from the memory of those who witnessed it; but its images, still vivid in the mind, recall feelings too painful to permit me to dwell longer upon a scene which has already been described by many.

Up to this time, the eighth day since he marched from Fort Brooke, General Gaines had been in hourly expectation of meeting General Clinch. Knowing the promptness of that officer, General Gaines could not now but apprehend that some serious obstacle had arisen to prevent the desired junction. Being only about forty miles from Fort King, the General felt bound to proceed thither to ascertain the situation of Clinch's command, and if possible to gain some information with regard to the movements of the enemy. His only doubt with regard to the expediency of proceeding thither was on the score of provisions; the men had with them enough to carry them back to Tampa if he returned immediately, and there, we knew, were abundant supplies. But if he proceeded to Fort King, he might not find a sufficient provision to make that position the basis of his operations, without embarrassing General Clinch with whom he desired to co-operate; — or General Scott, should he have arrived. An officer then mentioned to the General, that the Quartermaster had received, before we left Fort Brooke, a letter from the Quartermaster-General, notifying him that one hundred and twenty thousand rations had been ordered to Fort King in January preceding. This letter was immediately called for. It was from the Quartermaster-General's office, and dated the 19th of January. The passage that had been referred to was as follows: "Large supplies of provisions have been ordered from New York for Fort King; and thirty thousand rations to St. Augustine from the same place." This was the first time General Gaines saw the letter in question, or knew that a large additional supply had been ordered from New York to Fort King. He had brought a large supply of subsistence and forage to Tampa Bay, and had written to General Clinch to that effect from

New Orleans, intending to make Tampa the basis of his operations. But now unable to gain the least information of General Clinch's strength or movements, or those of the enemy, in any other way than by proceeding to Fort King, the acquisition of the information above detailed, removed the only doubt he had entertained with regard to the expediency of the measure.

He decided to push on without delay, and the order to march was given the moment the simple but solemn funeral-rites of the band of heroes was concluded. I have been thus precise in this part of my narrative, because a want of knowledge of the circumstances attending this measure has caused the whole movement to be so misconstrued, as to lay General Gaines liable to the charge of dashing, heedlessly, into the wilderness without any plan of operations, suffering himself to be separated by a wide district of the enemy's country from the depot of his supplies; and thus exposing his men to hardships and privations as unnecessary as profitless. But this is the second principal feature of the campaign that has been most unhesitatingly criticised.

The troops reached Fort King on the 22d of February, without meeting with any incident worthy of remark. A single company of the 3d Artillery constituted the garrison of this station. General Clinch with his principal force was at Fort Drane, twenty-two miles to the northwest. With great regret General Gaines now learned that Clinch had not received the expected reinforcement from the northern border of the territory—but two volunteer companies having joined him from that quarter. His force was four companies of artillery, one of infantry, and the two companies of volunteers I have mentioned. General Gaines was not less disappointed when he was told that the supply of provisions at these two posts (King and Drane) was little more than sufficient for their support.

Whether this disappointment was consequent to a reasonable expectation or not, I shall not pretend to determine. The simple facts from which must be determined the reasonableness or unreasonableness of the conclusion drawn from the information received by General Gaines on Dade's battle-ground, are these: the troops had marched from Fort Brooke on the 13th, with ten days' rations; at the Alafia they received two days' rations, brought thither by water, making in all twelve; that is, they were provisioned to include the 24th of February. On the 20th of February, General Gaines saw the letter of the 19th of January, already alluded to. From the date of the letter to the day he saw it inclusive, was thirty-two days; and to the 24th of February, the day to which his troops had been provisioned, is *thirty-six days.* The supplies had been ordered on the 19th,—how long before that, he knew not. The facilities of water-transportation from New York to the mouth of the St. John's River, and up that river by steam to Picolata, whence it is about seventy miles to Fort Drane, and ninety-two to Fort King, led to the conclusion, that in thirty-six days the supply would have reached its destination. The roads the troops had travelled were in fine order, the season having been remarkably dry; we were told no rain had fallen from some time in September till the day before we reached Dade's battle-ground, when there was a light rain.

At Fort King it was learned that preparations were making for the campaign, at Picolata, under the direction of General Scott. It was not thought, however, that he would be enabled to take the field with any considerable force for some time.

Finding he could expect no immediate co-operation from a quarter where he had expected to meet a considerable force,—Clinch's command being barely sufficient to supply the necessary escorts to the provision-wagons between Picolata and Fort Drane,—and unwilling to draw upon the nucleus of supplies here collecting, General Gaines decided on returning immediately to Tampa Bay, and make that the basis of his operations. He informed General Clinch of this, and requested barely a sufficient supply to last him on the march. He had marched from Fort Brooke to Fort King, by the main route, the common wagon-road. This road is longer, by a day's march, than the route by Chocochatee; he, therefore, determined to return by the latter. It was, indeed, the opinion at Fort King, that the Indians had established themselves near the point at which this trace crosses the Withlacoochee, viz., Clinch's battle-ground. If so, so much the better; he might beat them by the way. At any rate, the movement of one thousand men through the country occupied by the Indians, would have the effect of keeping them concentrated, and consequently relieve the frontier from petty depredations. Of the seventy-seven friendly Indians, who accompanied the brigade from Fort Brooke, ten returned with it, the balance remaining with General Clinch.

These men, who acted as guides, promised to find a ford somewhere near the point at which General Clinch had crossed. On the 27th, General Gaines reached the Withlacoochee at this point,—and a half hour or more had been passed in searching for the ford, when the enemy opened a fire from the opposite bank. The stream is about forty yards wide, but deep and rapid. A few companies were immediately brought into action, and very soon the fire became general from the left to the centre. This skirmish, the first bush-fighting the men had seen, lasted half an hour. The loss of the troops was one killed and seven wounded. The troops encamped near the river, and the guides declared the ford must be about three miles below, where a trail leading to the right struck the river.

The next morning by sunrise the three columns marched for the point indicated, on reaching which, a spirited fire was immediately opened from the opposite bank, which was quickly returned, and continued with occasional intermissions till one o'clock. In the early part of this action, the gallant Lieutenant Izard was mortally wounded. The loss this day was one killed and three wounded. The stream at this point also proved to be too deep to be forded. And the guides who had been accustomed to hunt in the lower country, and had not been in this section for many years, were totally at fault. The banks of the stream however, at this point were less thickly clad with the customary undergrowth, and the General determined to cross. A detail was accordingly made to prepare canoes and the flooring for a pontoon bridge; and the cheerful sound of the axe was soon mingled with the crack of the rifle and the animating war-cry. At four o'clock P. M. a distant but very loud whooping was heard, which indicated the approach of a large reinforcement to the enemy on the opposite side. The friendly Indians immediately declared it to be Micanopy, whose force they estimated at eight hundred warriors.

General Gaines, then satisfied that the whole force of the enemy was in the field, considered the opportunity of bringing the war to a close too favorable to be lost. Under this impression he sent an express to General Clinch, recommending an immediate movement of the force under his command, with an additional supply of ammunition and provisions. Clinch was desired to cross the river some ten miles above and move down on the left bank. General Gaines added that he would endeavor in the mean time to amuse the enemy, prepare his boats, &c. for crossing, but would not cross till he heard from Fort Drane, where General Clinch expected by that time some accession to his force.

By this movement it was believed that the two brigades would be enabled to attack the enemy in front and rear at the same time, and probably terminate the war in a few days.

The customary log breastwork was thrown up, about three feet high, and the troops left undisturbed that night. The following morning an attack was thought not improbable from some quarter; and one third of the men were kept on duty at the breastwork. At ten o'clock A. M., the working-parties were fired upon, and immediately afterwards a dashing attack was made on three sides of the camp. The Indians advanced boldly and fired with great rapidity, but not with precision. At one time they set fire to the high grass and palmetto on the windward side of the camp, and made a bold dash under cover of the smoke, which, mingled with flame, came rolling towards the breastwork like a heavy sea. The fire was coolly extinguished, and the audacity of the assailants punished by the Louisiana riflemen. The fight lasted till a few minutes past twelve o'clock M., when the enemy withdrew. Their numbers were estimated by those considered the best judges at fifteen hundred. The troops, having the advantage of the slight breastwork before mentioned, lost this day only one sergeant killed, and thirty-four officers and men wounded,— among the latter was General Gaines himself. The loss of the enemy was considerable, the troops firing with a coolness and precision which would do honor to veterans. Nor should the 29th of February be passed without bestowing a word of praise on the marked gallantry of their red assailants, who fought — many an old Indian-fighter present said — "as Indians never fought before." As the Indians had crossed the river, a runner was sent that night to General Clinch, informing him of the occurrences of the morning. In concluding this letter, General Gaines said: "I have abstained, and shall abstain from a sortie until I hear from you, in expectation that this course will tend to keep them together, while a sortie might contribute to disperse them. I am now satisfied that a direct movement to this place is more desirable than to cross the river higher up, as I suggested in my letter of yesterday. I am, moreover, of opinion that, if mounted men can be obtained in a few days, your force should not move from Fort Drane without that description of troops. The Indians move with too much celerity to be pursued with any chance of success by any other than mounted men." The following day, March 1st, there was light skirmishing, and occasional shots were fired at those who passed out of camp. On the morning of the 2d of March an attack was made nearly as vigorous as that of the 29th, and was kept up for one hour; but the troops having raised the breastwork, sustained little loss.

It was possible that General Clinch might arrive this afternoon; and many of the men, who were somewhat hungry, began to look eagerly for his appearance; though when they were told that if he should be detained by the non-arrival of the mounted men, it might yet be some days before they received a supply of provisions,—in which case they must be content to dine on horse-meat until they could do better,—I do not think there was a man who did not declare his willingness to do so, as long as there was a prospect of bringing the war to a successful termination by so doing. All the corn in camp was turned in as common stock, and afforded about a pint per man; and afterwards some horses were killed and the meat regularly issued. The 3d, 4th, and 5th of March did not produce any incidents greatly differing from those of the preceding days. The Indians were frequently firing into the camp by night as well as day, generally selecting the hour of guard-mounting or parade, when the men were most exposed. Our sharp-shooters, however, kept them at long shots, and their bullets whistled through the camp without doing much execution. On these occasions, as usual, the woods rung with the exciting war-cry. During this time we lost but one man killed and two wounded. At ten o'clock P. M. on the 5th, some one was heard hailing the camp. It was at first supposed to be a return express from Fort Drane, who was thus giving notice of his approach lest he should be fired on by the sentinels. He was told to advance. In a few moments a negro called out at the top of his voice: —

"The Indians are tired of fighting, and wish to come in to-morrow, and shake hands."

He was told that, if they had anything to say, they might come in the morning, with a *white flag*, and they would be heard. Whereupon he retired, bidding us a hearty "*good-night.*" At ten o'clock A. M. on the 6th, three hundred warriors, or thereabout, drew up in line facing the rear of the camp, at the distance of four hundred and fifty or five hundred yards. After some delay and apparent hesitation on their part, two or three advanced about half-way with a white flag. Here they were met by Adjutant Barrow, to whom they communicated their desire to have a *talk* with General Gaines. They said they had lost a great many warriors, and were unwilling to lose any more except in the course of nature, or perchance by the fall of a forest-tree. Captain Hitchcock, Acting Inspector-General, was then sent to hear what they had to say. He returned and reported that the Indians did not wish to fight any more; but that they were desirous that the troops should withdraw from the Withlacoochee. The celebrated *Oceola* was much dejected, and apparently subdued in spirit. Captain Hitchcock was directed to return and tell them that a large force would soon be in the field; and the inevitable consequence of their refusing to come to terms would be the destruction of a great portion of the nation.

They expressed a desire to treat with General Gaines; and said they would hold a council on the subject, and give their answer in the afternoon. They returned at the appointed time, and again expressed their desire to make peace with General Gaines, but said their act could not be binding without the sanction of Micanopy, the principal chief, who had gone to his town. They said they would send for him, and then sign a treaty. Captain Hitchcock communicated to them what he had been instructed to say, viz., that General Gaines had no authority to treat with them; but that if they would return to the south side of the Withlacoochee, and remain there without molesting the inhabitants of the country until the United States Commissioners should appoint a time and place to meet them, they should not for the present be disturbed. The chiefs present gave their promise to do so. At this moment General Clinch's advance came in sight of the party that had accompanied the chiefs, and not knowing what was passing at the camp, wheeled into line, and poured a volley upon the Indians, who immediately fled and crossed the river, as did the chiefs who were with Captain Hitchcock, fearing no doubt they would be shot down. This broke up the conference.

The brigade with Clinch was received with heart-felt greetings. He brought the greater part of the garrison from Fort Drane, and a squadron of mounted men, raised in the counties immediately north of Fort Drane, and with them all the supplies his slender means of transportation would allow, together with forty head of beef-cattle. From this time up to the 9th of March, the Indians remained true to their promise to abstain from hostilities, our men having frequently during these days fished and bathed in the river without molestation. Micanopy, however, did not arrive, and General Gaines decided this day to place the troops under the command of General Clinch, whose gallantry and decision had proved him so worthy of the trust; and prepared to return immediately to New Orleans, in pursuance of the instructions he had received at Pensacola.

On the 10th, General Clinch took up the line of march for Fort Drane. That night a negro, who had a wife among the hostile Indians, and among whom he had been sent on the 8th, returned, and reported that they assured him of their intention to adhere to their promises, and told him they would meet the whites on the Withlacoochee in five days, when all the principal chiefs would be present.

They said they had seen the soldiers fishing on the banks of the Withlacoochee, but, desiring to be at peace, they had not fired on them.

On the 11th, the brigade encamped about three miles south of Fort Drane. At parting with General Gaines, they addressed him a most complimentary and affectionate letter.

The General proceeded to Fort Drane, and soon after set out for New Orleans, by the way of Tallahassee and Pensacola. At New Orleans he received the instructions from the War Department relative to this frontier, and immediately proceeded to Fort Jesup.

This is a rough sketch, but you may rely on the facts, and you are at liberty to make use of the letter, if you think proper, for the information of the public.

Faithfully yours,

Geo. A. McCall,

A. D. C., Asst. Adjt. General.

P.S.—I mentioned in the foregoing that General Gaines was among the wounded. I must tell you how it occurred. A few minutes previously he had sent me with an order to Colonel Foster, commanding my old regiment, the 4th

Infantry; for I was still a First Lieutenant in that regiment, although detached on special service, as chief of General Gaines' staff. Foster was on the north front, where there was a small patch of woodland; and the Indians had occupied this wood in force, and were pouring in a heavy fire upon Foster. Of course I had to run the gantlet; but I found the Colonel, delivered the message, and returned unscathed. The General, as I returned to his side, addressing me, said in his quaint, old-fashioned style: "I'm glad to see, sir, that you have a very good stomach for war."

He had scarcely uttered these words, when a small rifle-ball struck a tree a little to the left and front, glanced and passed through his lower lip, breaking the two lower front teeth; the shock threw his head back, and he uttered a low exclamation, then at once leaned forward, and a stream of blood fell from his mouth. I bent towards him and asked, "General, are you badly hurt?"

"No," he replied; "there is the ball;" and he put his hand to his mouth, took the ball between his fingers and handed it to me. This little bullet is deeply indented with the impression of the two teeth; it is in my possession still. The old hero did not leave the ground.

[NOTE TO THE READER.

FREDERICK, Md., December 28, 1836.

In the October following the date of the letter just read, General Gaines was notified by the War Department that a Court of Inquiry would be ordered to convene in this city at as early a day as practicable, to examine into the *conduct* or management of the campaigns of General Scott and of himself, against the Seminole Indians during the year.

General Scott was soon after relieved from the command of the troops in Florida by General Taylor, and he arrived at Frederick by the time the court was organized. Some of the witnesses summoned by General Scott, among whom I was one, had also arrived. It is not my purpose to enter into the particulars of the trial of either of the Generals. The matter is part of the history of the country; and I shall only in this connection refer to an incident which concerned myself. That is to say, a copy of the foregoing letter, in which I had endeavored to show that, under the circumstances, General Gaines was not only justified in proceeding to Florida as he did, but would have been derelict in his duty had he not done so, was at the time sent by me to the Editor of the New Orleans "*Bee*," in which paper it was published and widely disseminated, and finally found its way into the hands of General Scott. In consequence whereof I was called to the witness-stand early in the course of his trial; the printed letter was produced, to which was affixed my official signature, and I was asked whether the letter was written by me. I replied that I had published the statement under my official signature, and held myself responsible for its correctness. No further question was asked; but the General preferred charges against me for publishing an account of a military campaign within the period prohibited by Regulations, whereby his plan of campaign was interfered with. The charges were sent to the War Department; and the Court then in session was ordered to investigate the matter. It is only necessary further to state that, after the cases of the two Major-Generals had been closed, I was brought before the Court and the matter investigated; and I had the satisfaction to learn, after making my defence, that I was honorably acquitted of all charges brought against me. This Court of Inquiry, as I should here mention, composed of Major-General Macomb, commanding the Army of the United States; Brigadier-General Atkinson, and Brigadier-General Brady; with Colonel S. Cooper, Assistant Adjutant-General, Recorder, then adjourned *sine die*.

In January, 1837, I took an affectionate leave of my old friend General Gaines, in whose staff I had served as Assistant Adjutant-General for six years, without the occurrence during the whole of that period, of the slightest incident calculated to produce an interruption of the confidence and good feeling which existed between the General commanding the Department and his Chief of Staff. Indeed, I can truly say, that never in my life did I meet with a gentleman of higher tone, more upright character, more inflexible independence of mind, together with so much amiability and benevolence of heart, as was possessed by that brave and noble old soldier, Major-General Edmund Pendleton Gaines. Six months previously to the time I speak of, I had been promoted to a captaincy in my regiment, 4th Infantry; but at the request of the General I had remained with him until the close of this unnecessary and provoking investigation.

I now proceeded to Washington City, and reported personally at the Head-Quarters of the Army. Here, instead of receiving orders to join my regiment, as I had anticipated, I was directed to open a Recruiting Rendezvous in Philadelphia. This was pleasant enough in so far as it enabled me to enjoy the society of my dearest relatives; but beyond that, the duty was irksome and disagreeable to me in the extreme. The recruits I made were almost without exception of the unsophisticated, untutored, and intractable sons of Erin; for the War Department not long before had been constrained to withdraw the restriction which allowed the enlistment of native citizens of the United States only. It had become too plain that the ranks of our army could not be filled with men whose intelligence and industry enabled them to fill higher places in the walks of life. It was therefore imperative not only to accept foreigners, but to reduce the standard of height. Few, however, even with this abatement of qualifications offered but the raw specimens of humanity just landed from the "Green Isle of the Ocean." These "*gintilmen*" were sometimes horribly given to amplification; and then it was a vexatious, not to say a perplexing matter to corner Paddy and *choke down* his mother-wit, in order to get at the plain truth. One instance will suffice: — At the usual hour for the examination of recruits, one bright spring morning, the surgeon and myself having *assembled* in my office high up in Market Street for the purpose I have stated, the sergeant brought, among other candidates for the honor of serving "*Uncle Sam*," a perfect Hercules in physical development, who, when divested of his habiliments, soon satisfied us, on beholding and strictly examining "*the limbs, the thews, the stature, the bulk, and big semblance of a man*," that no more fit "*food for gunpowder*" could anywhere be found; he was therefore incontinently "*passed*." This formula being throughout accomplished, the Doctor bade me good-morning; and the sergeant brought into the office, singly, the men who had been accepted, in order that I might make out the enlistment, in which was entered a full description of the recruit; as, *birthplace, age, height, complexion, eyes, occupation, &c.*; after which he was sent to the Magistrate to be "*sworn in*," as it is called by the soldiers, *i. e.*, to take the oath of allegiance. When it came to the turn of my verdant Hercules, I at first asked his name. "*John O'Dougherty*," he replied, in a strong, clear voice. This being written down, I continued without looking up from the paper: "Where born?" Answer, "New York." Supposing that my question had not been understood, I looked up at the man and repeated in a louder tone of voice, "Where were you born?" To this I received the most slow, deliberate, decided, and emphatic, but cool and not at all impudent reply, "N-E-W-Y-O-R-K." I looked at the man with a mingled feeling of indignation and amusement. And there stood the fellow, with a quiet, imperturbable expression that at once restored my own equanimity. I simply said to him, "Say, *peas!*"

"Is it *Pa-ase*, ye mean?" rolled out, in full Hibernian richness.

"Now, you scoundrel!" I broke out; "you tell me you were born in New York, and can't say, *peas!* — Where did you come from before you were *born in New York?*"

"County Tyrone, *to be sure!*" came forth from his capacious mouth, with the simplicity of an infant.

"And why did n't you tell me so at first?" I asked, rather tartly.

"Faix, I thought you would n't take me if I did," was the calm reply. And many such I had to deal with.

At last I was relieved from duty on this service and ordered to join my regiment. I left the home of my childhood again with the feelings at parting with those I loved best, that all of us have ofttimes experienced. But the elasticity of the human heart soon recovers its freshness when the excitement of action and the love of adventure urge us on; nor could I deny what the poet so sweetly says, "My heart 's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer." My love for hunting was in fact a *passion*.

Brief space of time did my "*Orders*" allow me for preparation; my "*traps*" were soon in readiness. One thing only gave me concern,—it was the failure almost to the last moment to procure a "*Setter dog*" of fine blood. At last, when but twelve hours were left me before the starting of the Pittsburg train, I heard of an old man living near the Navy Yard, who had a year or two before taken charge of Mr. John Hare Powel's dogs, whilst that gentleman was residing in England, and that probably this old man had some young dogs to dispose of. I jumped into the omnibus without a moment's pause, and was soon at this old man's house. Fortunately, I found him at home: he had no young dogs of the line of progeny I sought for, but a friend of his had a very fine young dog, a year old, of the breed undoubtedly I had asked for. He offered to conduct me to the house of his friend; and here, in truth, I found a splendid young dog as ever my eyes had rested on. Five-and-twenty dollars and a *douceur* to the old man made me happy in the possession of "*Sport*," of whom the reader will hear more hereafter. Having reached Wheeling, I found the Ohio too low in water for steam-navigation, and I was compelled to take the stage across the State of Ohio to Cincinnati. I stipulated, however, with the Agent that "*Sport*" should ride with the driver. By feeing each new driver as he mounted the box, which was once in two or three "*stages*," we succeeded in travelling very quietly, until we arrived at a "*stand*" a short distance from Columbia. Here, when fresh horses had been *hitched-to*, and the driver had taken his seat, I took *Sport* by the end of his chain, and stepping upon the wheel, spoke to him, when in an instant he sprang into the "*boot*," and gathered himself into a narrow compass at the driver's feet. I gave the man a half-dollar, and told him to take care of the dog; the driver fastened the chain, and I was in the act of descending, when the "Agent" came out of the bar-room of the tavern, and seeing what was being done, called out in an imperious voice,—

"Take that dog out of the boot!"

As the Agent approached the stage on the side next the driver and opposite me, he repeated his order, whereupon I arose upon the boot and said mildly,—

"I contracted with the Agent at Wheeling that my dog should ride in the boot throughout the whole of this line."

"Well, sir," was the peremptory reply, "more passengers are going on, and their baggage must go in the boot.—Driver, put that dog out."

Hereupon, the driver putting his hand into his pocket, drew forth the aforesaid half-dollar, and offering it to me, said,—

"I must obey orders, sir."

To this I replied for the enlightenment of the *Agent*, "What I have given you, my man, is your own;—but don't you lay hands on my dog."

On hearing this, the valorous Agent stepped briskly forward, and put his foot on the wheel as if about to mount; but as I stepped in front of *Sport* as if ready to meet him, he contented himself with declaring that the stage should not start until the dog was removed. My reply was, that the stage was full according to law, there being nine persons with their baggage already on board; that he had no right to incommode the legitimate passengers by crowding in more than the complement; and that, as my dog's passage in the boot had been agreed upon at the starting-point for the entire route, I was not disposed to have him turned out. The Agent then cooled down a little and said, "there were two ladies going on to Columbia, and there was no place for their baggage but the boot."

To which I rejoined, "that the boot was engaged for my dog, and if he forced the ladies inside, he might put their baggage on top."

The Agent insisted and I protested, and there was little chance of our getting away, when one of the gentlemen belonging to our company came forward to the front of the stage, where I was still standing by my dog, and very politely addressing me said,—

"These ladies tell me they have urgent matters requiring their presence at Columbia to-morrow; that the road thither is very bad, the night dark, and great danger of being overset will be incurred by putting the trunks on top. They have also requested me to say to you, that, if you will allow your dog to be taken inside, they will take good care of him."

To this I replied, "I would not for anything endanger the life or limb of any person of the party, and although I cannot for a moment tolerate the idea of this Agent putting my dog overboard, I cannot resist the appeal of the ladies: it must be as they say."

As I ceased speaking, I descended from the carriage, and the gentleman who had addressed me mounted up on the other side, unchained Sport, and opening the coach-door, put him inside. One of these ladies at once drew the dog in front of her, and said she would make him comfortable. I took no further notice of Sport, resigning him entirely to the care of his new friends. When we reached the breakfast-stand, one of the gentlemen led him into the breakfast-room and fed him from the table. Sport behaved throughout, very fortunately, with perfect decorum; and on our arrival at Columbia the two ladies left us, and Sport resumed his place in the boot, which he then retained till we reached Cincinnati.

The next day, a small flat-bottom steamboat undertook to make her way through the shallow waters of the Ohio, with passengers only to Louisville. I went on board with about twenty venturesome persons; and after forty-eight hours of hair-breadth escapes from getting hard and fast aground in the middle of the stream, at some locality without a name, upon the banks of the Great and "*Beautiful River*," where there was neither house nor lowly habitation for five or perhaps ten or fifteen miles of tangled forest, and this with only three or four days' provisions on board; and a prospect of ten day's detention.

But fortune favored us, and we reached our destination in good health and high spirits. My regiment was at the little town or village of Calhoun, on the Hiawassee River, in south-eastern Tennessee, whither it had been ordered to march from the seaboard of Georgia, to take part in the removal of the Cherokee Indians of the John Ross party, who were required now to give up their lands which lay around the point where the States of Tennessee, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, so singularly unite their respective corners, and to seek their newly allotted country in Arkansas Territory. My route lay through Nashville, and in the morning after my arrival at Louisville I called at the stage-office to engage my passage.

"Is the stage for Nashville full?" I inquired.

"No, sir,—one seat vacant."

"I will take it; but I have a dog that I wish to go with me."

"We cannot take your dog, sir."

"Can he not ride in the boot with the driver?"

"The boot, sir, is filled with the mail, and the driver himself can scarcely sit upon his box."

"Well, put him on top."

"The top is covered with the trunks and other baggage."

"Perhaps I'll have better luck to-morrow?"

"I cannot promise you, sir."

I strolled back to the hotel, where I found a coach at the door awaiting passengers for the race-course, where the driver informed me some crack horses were to run that day; so, for want of better employment, I stepped in, and with half a dozen Kentucky gallants was driven to the grounds. Here I met on the stand an old and much admired friend, Colonel

Stephen Kearney of the 1st Dragoons, with his nephew, Lieutenant Philip Kearney, of the same regiment, and the sister of the latter. Here were many of the *élite*, both ladies and gentlemen, on the ground; the horses were the best in the State; the running was beautiful, and the day passed very pleasantly. The next morning I returned to the stage-office; two seats were vacant; the objections of the Agent were those of the day before. I told him then, I would take the two seats, and take my dog inside.

He replied, "It is impossible, sir. I would with pleasure oblige you if I could, but the stage runs full every day, and I dare not give you a seat for a dog."

This seemed to settle the question as to the stage, and I left the office grumbling to myself, "I've brought Sport thus far, and I'll carry him through *coûte qui coûte;*" and thus I argued: Now if I buy a horse and buggy, I shall travel more pleasantly and more cheaply; and what is three or four hundred miles from here to Fort Cass? (Calhoun.) I can join my regiment before muster-day, and that's all that is necessary."

I had not walked more than two squares before my good star had led me to a livery-stable, before unknown, where at the entrance I found a man grooming a horse as beautiful as singularly marked. He might be called white, though his mane was black; his head, neck, and shoulders were dappled with gray; while his rump was partially covered with large blotches of a roan color, and his full, flowing tail was of a pure white.

"Is that a circus-horse you have there?" I demanded of the groom.

"No, sir; he belongs to a gentleman who drives him about town in a buggy."

"I am looking for a horse and buggy; perhaps you can put me in the way of getting one."

"I believe the owner of this horse is disposed to sell; but here he comes now."

In fact, that person joined us the next moment. In five minutes I had bought the horse and buggy for three hundred dollars—a good price in Kentucky at that time. Mr. McKavett, as the owner was named, got in with me and drove to a coach-maker's, where a trunk-rack belonging to the vehicle had been left. This was strapped on, and we proceeded to the hotel, where I packed my trunk, paid my bill, ordered Sport and the trunk brought out, and started at once upon my journey. My new friend in the meantime had mounted a horse to accompany me a mile out of town, as he said, to put me on the road to Nashville and see that all went right. All went as well as I could have desired, and I drove twenty miles to a house where I had been recommended to stop. I was pleased with the horse; he was only four years old, bred in Northern Illinois, and had the fine mule-shaped foot of a horse raised in a rocky country.

The roads were good, and I travelled pleasantly for several days, making about forty-five miles a day; but then came a steady rain; I was, however, prepared for it: an oiled-silk cloak of great volume, together with a cap with large cape of the same material, that I had procured in Canada a short time before, effectually protected me and extended over the back and sides of the buggy, while the leather apron of my vehicle rendered an equally important service in front. On my stopping at a road-side inn to ask a light for a cigar, the landlord, who came forth to greet me with a welcome, after scrutinizing my apparel for a moment, said, in his loud, hearty voice,—

"Why, sir, a drop of rain strikes the top of your cap and never touches the buggy!"

Two days of this rain was followed by a heavy sleet, that began to trouble my horse as I approached a chain of hills called the Walnut Ridge near the State line. I stopped at a very nice farm-house on the road to light a cigar, near the foot of the ridge, when a very respectable, well-dressed person, above the station of a common farmer, asked me if my horse was rough-shod. On my replying in the negative, he declared it would be impossible for me to get up the mountain. And to my inquiry whether he could furnish me with a good horse, he said he had furnished travellers who had preceded me with all his horses, and finally with all his oxen, and that they would not be back till late. On my observing that I was anxious to reach a stand some twenty-five miles distant, he said that if a neighbor who had been with him that morning had not left the house, he would try to get me through. He soon returned with his neighbor; and having proceeded to the ascent, (which was in truth steep,) they advised me to get out and drive the horse, while they applied their shoulders to the back of the buggy.

We had scarcely made three paces before my horse came down, the road being a sheet of smooth ice, and his shoes like polished steel. I applied the whip, and he sprang up like a bird; but I soon found, that, although he could keep his footing if relieved from the weight of the carriage, he could not pull a dozen pounds without falling. Seeing that I used the whip pretty freely, the principal man said,—

"He's a noble horse: it is a pity to punish him so!" and they exerted themselves to their utmost. At length they brought me to the summit, after near an hour's labor. They now informed me that the ridge was quite level, and the road in good order for about ten miles; after which I would descend the mountain and have good roads to the house where I purposed stopping. I very cheerfully offered them a five-dollar note, with many thanks for their assistance, without which I should never have reached the summit that day. This they positively declined, saying that if I would give them a dollar apiece, they would feel amply repaid for their labor, which they had given rather from desire to oblige me than from an intention to make money out of me. I made my stage without further trouble than that caused by meeting a Cherokee train of wagons moving West, while I was descending the mountain eastward. The road being sometimes cut into the side of the solid rock, and I having the outside track, was occasionally compelled to drive almost on the edge of the precipice. Once indeed I was entering, or rather had entered, a very narrow stretch, where two wagons could not possibly have passed each other, nor could I have backed up the steep, when to my no small concern I beheld a wagon approaching the other end. The distance was not more than fifty yards, and I called to the teamster, a rough Georgia cracker, to stop his team until I got through. But he had the inside track and did not seem disposed to consult my safety. Whereupon I caught up my double-barrel gun, which by the by was not loaded, and swore a terrible oath that I would shoot him if he did not halt his team instantly. The threat had the desired effect. The man drew up, and as I passed him I read him a pretty sharp lecture, which he took very quietly. I humbly trust the language in which my threat was couched has been forgiven; for the obtuse senses of these degraded Indian-white men cannot be moved by mild and gentle speaking. In due time I drove into Nashville, where I found old Edmonson, and his big son John, still in the full tide of business and good cheer of his excellent hotel.

I stopped one day at Edmonson's to rest myself and my young horse, who was everywhere much admired for his symmetry of form as well as for his singular markings. On the second day, after a 12-o'clock lunch, the buggy was brought to the door, and Sport (with the baggage) being duly installed, I drove off gayly on my way to Calhoun, distant about one hundred and sixty miles, having travelled two hundred miles from Louisville to Nashville. My horse moved off handsomely, and I felt quite proud of him and his companion *Sport;* the pair attracting all eyes as I drove through the streets to the southern part of the city from which my road branched off in a south-east direction.

As I entered the street of which my *route* was a continuation, I came upon the descent of a long and steep hill. There was a straight stretch before me of about half a mile; and as soon as I commenced descending this paved road, my beautiful and hitherto gentle horse made a tremendous leap forward, and the next instant his heels were in the air as high as my head. In this way we began to move down the steep slope by alternate leaps and flinging out of the heels at a rate by no means calculated to tranquillize the nerves of one at all excitable; or to soothe his temper if given to the little ebullitions of constitutional contrariness which induce violent opposition, and even sometimes the diabolical desire and eagerness to destroy whatever contributes to disturb his natural equanimity.

What my sentiments were, I must leave to your *Honor* to conjecture; but as to facts, I feel bound to say that I perceived with some concern a loaded cart, and no one with it that I could discover, coming up the hill so near the middle of the street, which was by no means wide, that my vehicle could not pass on either side without collision and a probable crash on my part. My beautiful horse was still going downhill at a rate that in a few moments would have brought us upon the cart.

It was rather an awkward time for reflection, splitting hairs, and drawing consequential inferences. In short, I was in a diabolical mood at being thus ill-used, without cause as I supposed, and thus addressing my beautiful horse, I said,—

"If any necks are to be broken here, my beauty, you shall break your own first!"

My eye had caught sight of a large Jackson-hickory-pole (an immense tree) on the edge of the pavement on the right. With a strong hand I intended to bring his head directly against this tree, and break his beautiful neck rather than be overturned and dashed on the stones by the loaded cart now almost under my horse's nose, with the probability of having my own neck very unceremoniously dislocated. With this diabolical purpose I had brought the beautiful horse's head positively within two feet of the tree, when by a sudden and tremendous spring to the right he cleared the obstacle, brought the fore-wheels over the curb-stone, and his beautiful head into the bosom of a tall mulatto man who was standing in the open door of a barber-shop. This tall fellow with perfect coolness and steadiness caught the horse by the reins near the bit, and held him with a giant's strength still and fast. Seeing the man's strength and steadiness, I said to him,—

"Back him out into the street, and see what is the matter."

He in a moment told me the *breech-band* had been carelessly buckled round the shafts without being put through the iron loops which hold the breeching in place and prevent the carriage from running upon the horse. I then got out of the buggy, properly fastened the breeching and inspected the establishment generally. Finding no damage had been received by the vehicle, owing to the horse's heels flying too high in the air to touch the dasher, I again mounted to my seat, and giving the powerful mulatto a present for his conduct, I told him to lead the horse out to the middle of the street and let him go. He, *the beautiful*, then went gayly but soberly down the hill, and after a mile's gentle trot, I "*put him out*," and he went as steadily as ever.

This horse was, you must know, no other than "OLD WHITY," General Z. Taylor's battle-steed: afterwards so well-known to history, that, when the General returned to New Orleans after his victory over Santa Ana at Buena Vista, a hair from Old *Whity's* tail was eagerly seized by the populace as a trophy when the General rode in the procession through the streets. To explain this enigma touching my runaway horse, I will here state in *three words*, that, after reaching the Headquarters of my regiment at Calhoun, I took the horse with me when the regiment marched to Fort Gibson, Arkansas Territory, where I rode him for three years. At the end of this period, my regiment being ordered again (the second time) to Florida, General Taylor, who was at Fort Smith on the Arkansas, sixty miles below Fort Gibson (and the Headquarters of his Department), came up to Fort Gibson to inspect the regiment before its departure for the seat of war. He saw my horse, admired him, and expressed a wish to possess him, provided I did not intend to take him with me. I was, of course, very glad to place my old friend in such good hands; and I promised to deliver him to the General when we arrived at Fort Smith, where we were to embark on two steamers there waiting our arrival. My last ride on the *beautiful* horse, on whom, by the by, I had never conferred a name, was on this march of sixty miles. Here I took leave of my old friend, and delivered him safely into the hands of the General; after which I went on board, and we steamed down the Arkansas that afternoon. The history of this horse, whom age had finally deprived of his singular markings and reduced him very nearly to a pure white, is so well known that I need say no more of him.

I must now return from the digression into which I fell when casually narrating the incident of my drive out of Nashville. And to do this, I need only say that I arrived at Fort Cass (or Calhoun, as the embryo village was called) without further adventure than one day overtaking an emigrant family from the "*Old North State*," as North Carolina is termed, probably hangers-on of the Cherokees, and wending their way to the West, to reunite with their red friends. This family consisted of a man and his wife; the complexion of the latter being tinged a little with red blood, as well as that of the two children who accompanied them, indicated their Indian descent. These four were ensconced in a light wagon, which likewise carried their household-gods as well as all their worldly possessions. A stout dame, whom I afterwards discovered to be the man's mother, was mounted on a strong farm-horse and led the way. She was a Georgian, as well as her son, and of pure white blood; but as ignorant as the savages on the borders of whose country her parents had lived, and from among the daughters of whom her son had taken his help-mate—or help-meet—a good-looking, young woman, evidently of mixed blood as the color that mantled upon her round smooth cheek indicated.

The road just here was very deep with a tenacious mud or clay, and as I passed the wagon, I fell in with the matron, who boldly accosted me, and freely commented upon the appearance of my horse and dog.

"You belong to a circus company, I reckon?" she remarked.

"No," said I, "I have not that honor."

"Then, maybe you're a sleight-of-hand man. I should like to see you perform some of your tricks."

"Wrong again, my old lady," I replied.

"Well, I reckon you've got something to show in that big trunk behind yer buggy, anyhow."

"Nothing that you would care about seeing."

"Then, what on earth are ye, any way—and where are ye going with that pretty '*paint-horse,*' and that big dog that sets up so straight in the carriage? I 'll bet he knows *something*, for he looks mighty wise."

"Well, to let you a little bit into my secret, my good lady, I must tell you that I am a person that has what is called a *profession*; and I am going to join some of my friends who have the same profession; and as the road is getting much better and I have no time to chat, I must bid you good-morning;" and so saying, I trotted on, regardless of the old woman's pressing demand to know what my *profession* might be. On arriving at Fort Cass, I found Lieutenant-Colonel William S. Foster in command of the regiment, which was quite full, and all in good health.

The following letter is the first of a new series that I find.]

Fort Cass, on the Hiawassa River, Tenn.,
November 26, 1838.

My dear Brother:—I arrived here on the 25th October, quite well. . . . On reporting at the Headquarters of my regiment, I learned from Colonel Foster that General Scott had been ordered to this point to look to, and if necessary to enforce the removal of the "*Ross party*" of the Cherokees, who had refused to give up the lands of their inheritance and take up their abode in the country allotted them west of the State of Arkansas. Heretofore, agreeably to a treaty made with *Major Ridge*, that chief and his adherents had migrated at the time appointed and were settled on lands west of the Neosho, a branch of the Arkansas; but this measure cost Ridge his life; for soon afterwards he was assassinated by some of his people on the avowed charge of having deceived them, and sold their lands to the Government of the United

States to gratify his own avarice. Meantime John Ross had acquired with the chieftainship unbounded control over the leading men of his party; and having been induced by Government, after some years of negotiation, to give his assent to the removal of his party, he had ordered the sub-chiefs to collect their bands at the little town or village of Calhoun, and he was now sending them off, in small detachments as they came in, by the route to Memphis, where they crossed the Mississippi. [It was the baggage-train of one of these bands that I had met in descending the Walnut Ridge, having previously passed the party consisting of the men, women, and children of a detachment conducted by one of the sub-chiefs.—*G. A. McC.*, 1867.] The Colonel also informed me, that at the request of John Ross, General Scott had ordered one company of the regiment (the only troops here) to be mounted and sent into the mountains of Tennessee and North Carolina, to hunt up and bring in stragglers. In conformity with this order, the Colonel had mounted the first light company, "A," commanded by Captain C. H. Larned, and dispatched him upon this service. At about one hundred and fifty miles north of our present position, Larned met unexpectedly with the family of an Indian known by the white settlers of that region as "Old Charles." This family consisted of the patriarch, his two married sons and their wives, two married daughters and their husbands, a younger son about sixteen, and three grandchildren,—in all twelve souls; old Charles, a cunning old fox, having taken advantage of the confusion at the moment of capture to make his escape. Having disarmed the men even to their knives, the captain put the party in charge of one of his subalterns, Lieut. Smith, and two men, with orders to conduct them to Fort Cass. After several days' march, discovering that the women, who had to carry their children much of the way, were in danger of being prostrated by fatigue, the Lieutenant, observing that the Indian men had been quiet and submissive, evincing no disposition to escape, ordered his men to dismount and give their horses to the women, who mounted "*a la cavalier*" two on a horse, with a *picaninny* in front; and the march was resumed much to the satisfaction of the prisoners. The Lieutenant had been furnished with money to procure subsistence for his party at the houses occasionally met with along the road, whether of whites, or Indians to whom reserves had been granted in consideration of their having obtained citizenship according to the State laws.

This officer, Lieutenant Smith, who it seems had been disarmed of all distrust of the husbands of the women by their tranquil demeanor, imprudently rode in advance of his party, the Indian men following him, and these again followed by the two soldiers on foot, while the women mounted on the two horses brought up the rear. It appears, however, that the Indians had planned an attack upon their captors; and one of them had managed to get possession of a hatchet at one of the houses, while another possessed himself of a knife. These weapons they concealed under their blankets, and at a moment when all suspicion of their treacherous design was banished from the thoughts of the soldiers, the savages at a preconcerted signal sprang upon their victims; the skull of one was cleft with the blow of the hatchet, and the other was stabbed to the heart, while a third like a tiger bounded upon the Lieutenant, and seizing him around the waist, endeavored to drag him from his horse. The horse, however, was a powerful animal, and having the spurs driven into his flanks by his rider, who was a vigorous man of five-and-twenty, and withal a fine horseman, dashed off at a speed that raised the Indian from the ground and swung him dangling at his side. Still it was a fearful struggle and long continued. Smith afterwards told me that he was so nearly exhausted that he felt he should not be able to maintain his seat a minute longer when the Indian's hold relaxed and he fell to the ground. Of his after-adventures I heard nothing; but on his return to Headquarters, General Scott ordered Foster to march with the whole regiment to capture the murderers and execute them on the spot. This order had been given the day before I arrived; and orders had been issued by the Colonel that the regiment should be in readiness to march on the day following that of my arrival, *i.e.* the 27th October. Colonel Foster was in bad health at the time, and although he accompanied the regiment, he placed me, the senior captain with the regiment, in immediate command, with authority to regulate the marches, make all necessary details, and, in fine, to issue such orders as in my judgment might seem proper for the good of the service; while he rode with a file of mounted men in advance, or having halted at some farm-house, he brought up the rear, as his strength might enable him to do. The first day's march was accomplished without incident. The following day the *Reveille* was, by my order, sounded before daylight had streaked the east with Aurora's roseate hue, for I was always an advocate for an early movement, in order to finish the march soon after noontide, that the troops might have time to collect wood, prepare their meal for the morrow's march, and make themselves comfortable for the night before the day was spent. In fine, as the *Reveille* sounded I arose, took my cup of hot coffee, had my horse saddled, and with the bridle on my arm was standing in front of my camp-fire, when the bugler detailed as my orderly to sound such calls as "halt," or "advance," or any other that might become necessary on the march, reported to me for duty for the day. I retained my position with my back to the fire in a half dreamy mood, for the morning was damp and chilly, until the Adjutant reported:

"The companies are all present, sir," when I turned to the bugler, and said,—

"Sound the *assembly*, Lane."

The man, instead of obeying my order, replied in a most deliberate tone of voice,—

"My name is not *Lane*, sir."

I looked at the man again, with a faint and indistinct feeling of surprise that I could not altogether at the instant analyze, for I had only been two days with the regiment and had not seen this man before, to my knowledge. I simply inquired, "What is your name?"

"My name," he replied, with a slow and distinct enunciation that could not be surpassed,—"my name is *Burrows*, sir!"

I then said, "Well, sound the call;" and mounting my horse, rode out in front of where the line was being formed, and took my position. Very soon the Adjutant advanced and reported, "The battalion is formed;" whereupon I gave the command which the nature of the ground required: "*Break to the Right, to march to the Left;*" and when we were coming upon the road, the further command, "Break into Sections;" after which I took my place at the head of the column, with an advance of a sergeant and six men with axes and spades strapped on their backs as "*pioneers;*" these men carried their arms as well as the implements requisite to remove obstacles, fill up and level such places as would otherwise be impassable for our wagons, &c., &c. All went on smoothly, and the morning being cool, as I have already remarked, the head of the column moved on at a good pace. After about an hour's march, however, Captain Gouverneur Morris, the second in command, whose company happened that day to be in rear, (for the company which marched in front yesterday, to-day falls to the rear of the column, in order in that way to equalize the fatigues of the march,) rode up to me and reported that his company was much spread out; for you must know that the little detentions to which the head of the column may be exposed in crossing small watercourses, or in overcoming any obstacles, is greatly magnified by the time the rear reaches it, which in turn is opened in column and retarded until it becomes laborious to keep that part of the column closed. I ordered the Adjutant, who was riding at my side, to direct the officer leading the column to slacken his pace, and then turning to Captain M., who was about to return to his company, I asked, "Morris," (he had been at the Military Academy at West Point with myself,)—"Morris, do you recollect '*Cat Lane*' at West Point?" At this abrupt and unexpected question the Captain burst into one of his peculiar and contagious laughs, and replied as he rolled back upon his saddle,—

"Of course I do;—what of *Cat?*"

I replied, "Simply that he is with the regiment."

"*What!*" exclaimed the Captain, in a tone of extreme astonishment and incredulity, "Cat Lane with our regiment?—are you jesting, or what on earth can you mean?"

"I am not jesting," I replied rather seriously, "and I mean that Lane the bugler, when we were cadets at the Military Academy, is *one of the buglers of our band;* he is my orderly to-day, and when I called him *Lane*, he assumed great gravity, and said his name was not *Lane*, but '*Burrows.*'"

"What!" cried Morris in amazement, "*Old Burrows* and *Cat Lane* one!—impossible."

"It is as true as that you are Gouverneur Morris, I assure you; and if you will come up to the front when we halt for lunch, I will be out of the way and you may question him."

Morris promising to come to the front after lunch, rode back to join his company. I will now tell you about Lane as I knew him at the Military Academy. He was a bugler in the band of Willis, the celebrated key-bugle leader. At that time—while I was a cadet—Lane was about forty years of age, six feet high, straight as an arrow, and of a figure of the finest proportions, that, when in full dress of tight-fitting scarlet coatee, white trousers, and light sword suspended by a white shoulder-belt with highly polished brass plate, was the *beau ideal* of a soldier as far as the *physique* was to be considered; but beyond that he was so eccentric as to appear at times but half-witted. Among his accomplishments, besides being a remarkably fine bugler, was the faculty of imitating the cries of all sorts of birds and quadrupeds, but particularly the caterwauling of the feline tribe, which had gained him the appellation of "*Cat-Lane.*"

Such was Cat-Lane when I received my commission as Brevet 2d Lieutenant, sixteen years ago. I had not seen him nor dreamed of him since. The bugler who reported to me on the second morning of our march was a great, burly fellow, with a paunch like an ox; his weight could not have been much less than two hundred and twenty or two hundred and thirty; his hair was well grizzled, and his face bore the expression of one who in his time had been rather addicted to strong drink. How it came to pass that I should recognize the jaunty, nice, foppish, finical Cat-Lane in this overgrown mass of obesity, I have never been able to divine. We know that sounds have great power in recalling scenes of by-gone days; a single note from a musical instrument will sometimes bring vividly to mind pleasant or painful reminiscences that had long been lost in oblivion. Whether it was the tone of voice of this man in reporting to me, that recalled him, so long forgotten, to my mind; whether it was something in the expression of his face, however much the features were changed; or something that bore a resemblance, however faint, to that immutable stamp which nature had placed upon his countenance; — what it was, I say I know not; but I do know that, after an interval of sixteen years, I unconsciously called this man *Lane;* and it was not until he had told me that his name was not Lane, but Burrows, that I became aware that I had in reality called him by his former name. It was strange enough, take it in any light; and here comes Morris after lunch, laughing to himself.

"Well, Morris," I exclaimed, "what says *Cat* Lane?"

"Oh! it's old Cat! sure enough—ha! ha! ha!—but how in the name of wonder did you find him out?"

"I cannot possibly tell you anything about it,—I called him Lane, but I know not why; yet the more I thought of it, the more I was satisfied that he was the veritable '*Cat-Lane;*'—but what did he say?"

"Oh! he denied it—ha! ha!—it was funny enough. As I said, he denied it so stoutly, that at first I thought you must have been mistaken; but I pushed him home, and at last I drew from him a full confession."

"It must have been amusing;—how was it?"

"Well,—all that he would admit was in substance as follows:—After serving two terms of enlistment of five years each in the Band at West Point, he declined, for what reason I could not clearly ascertain, to continue longer in the service of *Uncle Sam.* Being still an active man, he went to New York and engaged with a circus company as musician. After remaining with these people for a season, he tired of their mode of life, and enlisted on board the United States seventy-four ship *Ohio*, for a three years' cruise as member of the Band. He served his term in this noble vessel in the Mediterranean; returning from this three years' cruise, he sought employment with a farmer, and retired into civil life in the neighborhood of the city of New York, where he remained in the happy enjoyment of rural life, until cloyed with the sweets of country existence, he sought military excitement and renown in the 4th Regiment. Such is the history of Cat Lane, or bugler Burrows, since you knew him at West Point, as he recited, I believe faithfully, to me. What was his reason for changing his name, I did not inquire;—there might have been private griefs that I did not feel at liberty to inquire into;—but you know, soldiers frequently enlist under feigned names; it seems to be a characteristic of the class, though I don't think it indicates, necessarily, the criminality of the previous life of the person."—As the time for resuming the march had arrived, we mounted our horses, and calling to old Cat, or Burrows, to sound the "*advance*," we moved on. I don't know that I mentioned to you that Colonel Foster had very kindly invited me to join his mess. I had no hesitation in accepting the invitation, for several reasons, among which the more prominent were, that I knew and felt that the offer was frankly and cordially extended, for we had been on the most friendly and intimate terms for many years; and because I knew that he kept an excellent "*cuisine;*" and finally, I had just joined the regiment and had as yet no outfit.

In four days we reached the Tuckaseege River, a large tributary of the Tennessee. The water was high and running furiously. This stream is fordable at ordinary stages of water; and whenever a large rock, called the "*Cherokee rock*," about a quarter of a mile from our side, is plainly visible, the ford may be passed without danger; but when that rock disappears, the river cannot be crossed without great danger of the strongest teams and heaviest wagons being carried away. We had encamped about two miles from the Tuckaseege, the evening before, and reached the river at the ford at about seven o'clock in the morning. When I arrived at the head of the column, I found the Colonel on the river-bank; and he pointed out to me the *Cherokee rock*, and informed me that the people (Indians and whites) in the neighborhood had declared the river fordable, if attempted at once and before the rock disappeared, and that he had decided to attempt it. We had brought with us one wagon to each company, besides five more for the transportation of subsistence for the troops, and a small supply of grain for the horses and mules. The wagons had been put in front on the march, and were drawn up at the ford when I arrived with the head of the column.

Ten men were at once put into each wagon with their arms and knapsacks, in addition to its regular load, and started in to try the ford. The Colonel had taken passage in the leading wagon. Larned's mounted company, which, by the by, had returned to Fort Cass when the fatal occurrence to Smith's command took place, was now brought forward, and I ordered each mounted man to take up behind him an infantry soldier with his musket and knapsack, and to enter the stream two abreast. I directed Larned to send back the best of his men, each leading two horses besides the one he rode; and in this way, with seventy horses, the crossing of the regiment was progressing very happily. After a little while, however, an incident fell out that was near enough terminating in the loss of one of my men. It so happened that two strapping sons of Erin stepped up, as bold as lions, to mount upon the same horse. As it was necessary that one of the two should ride behind, that important point of *etiquette* was at last accommodated, at the expense of much elegant speech and not a little elocution. Finally, being mounted, they entered the stream; here it was immediately important that the horse's head should be kept firmly up-stream, as the water, though not more than about two feet deep, ran with great force, and ten feet below the entrance it was six feet deep.

The fellow on whom fortune had blindly conferred the jockeyship, knew no more about a horse than his grandmother; and although cautioned by the sergeant I had placed at the entrance to the ford to turn his horse up-stream, had somehow gotten his reins crossed, and as the blind goddess would have it, turned the horse down-stream, and in a moment he was swimming in deep water, and through some extraordinary management of his bridle-rein the animal was turning round as the current carried him away. The man "*en croupe*" became giddy from the combined motion of the horse and the water and tumbled off, musket and knapsack (the latter he had fortunately unbuckled and carried in his left hand, while his right grasped his musket). All this occurred in but a moment of time; but as I was sitting on my horse at the brink of the river-bank, I perceived that, while the horse with the man who was in the saddle was swiftly carried down the stream, the other could not swim a stroke, and as he went down the second time, I plunged my horse into the water. He proved to be a noble swimmer, and suffered me without hesitation to guide him to the spot where the man had disappeared. Fortunately the fellow's head popped up just to the right of my horse's neck, and reaching forward, I seized him by the coat-collar. At first he struggled as if an alligator had caught him; but as I told him to grasp the horse's mane and be still, his senses came to him, and turning my horse up-stream, he swam beautifully against the swift current and landed us at the entrance to the ford, with no other loss than the musket and knapsack.

The other horse swam down-stream about fifty yards, and landed his stupid rider on a sand-flat from which he soon reached the firm bank. Without further adventure, I succeeded in crossing the regiment, and with my trusty steed [subsequently, "*Old Whity,*"—*G. A. M.*, 1867] brought up the rear.

We had now fairly entered the mountains, well-named "*Smoky;*" for when we had penetrated a day's march into their fastnesses, the atmosphere as viewed from their summits had a peculiarly smoky appearance, which lent a charm to the distant view that I think I have never met with elsewhere. On the second day after crossing the Tuckaseege we came, at times, suddenly upon its banks again as it wound its tortuous course through steep-sided, narrow valleys; or dashed like a torrent down some straight stretch, tumbling over *boulders*, or rather I should say masses detached from the adjacent mountain-sides, which made its waves, as they flew by, look like great banks of drifting snow that a heavy wind was carrying along with it. After marching about one hundred and fifty miles, we came to the country usually occupied by "*Old Charles*" and his family as a summer retreat. Here were his little corn-fields and his leafy tents, but no appearance of recent habitation. The head-quarters were established here, and half a dozen companies sent out to search the country far and near for "*sign*" of the runaway murderers. All, at length, returned after a fruitless search of some days.

The Colonel now decided to put the thing in the hands of the Reserve Cherokees, that is to say, of those who, as I before said, had become citizens of the State. He sent for the chief (magistrate); and this man-in-office consented to have them hunted up, apprehended, tried, and executed, if found guilty of the murder of the soldiers.

In less than a week the chief brought in the whole party, except old Charles, who was reported "*non-comatable in swampo.*" The party however consisted of thirteen, the original number, one of the wives having again become a mother during their absence from the troops. The court or jury had decided that the four men were guilty of murder, and they were sentenced to be shot to death. The boy, named, by the by, Washington, was recommended for mercy on account of his youth and his ignorance of the plot.

The chief also consented, at the request of the Colonel, to have the sentence carried into effect by his own warriors. The whole party were placed in confinement under the body of the guard. On visiting the guard, I had the men brought out, and through the interpreter I learned that Charles' oldest son, a man of about thirty-eight years, was the one with whom the plot originated, and likewise the one who had cleft the soldier's skull. I requested him to sit down upon the ground, that I might examine his phrenological developments. He obeyed quietly, and sat perfectly still, while I made the examination.

As I looked round upon the group who had, from curiosity to see what I might be about, collected in front of me, I availed myself of the opportunity to take a cursory view of their more prominent traits of character. These, considered as the representatives of a class or tribe, were of very low order. There was less intellect than I had generally seen among those of the nation I had hitherto met with. They were very dark in complexion and evidently low in circumstances, probably among the most degraded of the tribe.

I proceeded now with the examination. The brain as a whole was small, I might say very small, though the general *physique* or natural constitution was good; the man was fully six feet in height and strongly knit. The most fully developed organs were those of "*firmness*," or perseverance and steadiness of purpose; "*self-esteem*," or love of independence and personal dignity; "*veneration*," or love for worthless objects consecrated by time, or of antiquated customs; and "*inhabitiveness*," or the desire of permanence in place, or aversion to move abroad. Now, these organs are contiguous, and are situated along the top and upper part of the back head, and in this case formed quite a ridge.

In speaking of the organs above named, I have given what is considered the abuse of them,—not what are their promptings when guided and directed by high moral sentiment. His "*destructiveness*," or propensity to kill and to murder, was moderate or rather weak; the perceptive faculties were good; the intellectual quite inferior. From this examination, I should say he had been prompted to the act for which he was soon to suffer, by an independent spirit that could not brook restraint; an all-absorbing love for the country of his birth, the mountain region in which his manhood had been passed in tracing through its strong vales and over its bleak and rocky summits the deer and the wolf; in fine, to that well-known feeling of attachment that all mountain-people are understood to bear towards the land of their forefathers.

His willingness to destroy his guard was simply to enable the women and children of his party to escape. Had he been alone, or with men only, nothing would have been easier for him than by a single bound to make his escape while passing through any one of the many thickets which like a wall enclosed the narrow road.

The time, however, came for his execution and that of his fellows.

At four o'clock P. M., on the day designated for carrying the sentence into effect, I formed the regiment in line, in front of and facing a small grove of young trees, selected by the Indians as the place of execution. They had trimmed up four saplings two or three inches in diameter and six feet apart, and cleared the ground around them. They were in line parallel to the line of the regiment. The doomed men were now marched along the front of the regiment, and delivered by our guard to the Indians. Each one was placed with his back against one of these saplings; a cord was then passed between the body and the arms above the elbows, and this was then fastened to the young tree.

The sub-chief who was in command on the occasion, then passed along their line, and tied a strip of muslin, folded about three inches wide, over the eyes of each one of them; as the chief came to the elder son, he dropped a silver dime from his mouth into the hand of the latter, and requested him to give it to his wife. All arrangements being now perfected, two Indians with their rifles stepped about five paces in front of each of the condemned, and were ordered to fire, one at the forehead, the other at the heart. The chief, who stood immediately in rear of his men, then gave the command with a loud voice (in the Cherokee language), "Ready"—"Aim"—"Fire." The motions were most accurately executed by the Indians, and the balls were placed with great precision where they had been ordered. I was standing about four feet from old Charles' oldest son, whose head I had examined, and whose countenance I wished to observe at this moment. From the time he took his place, not a muscle of his face moved, the expression of his countenance was an unconstrained, undisturbed, placid indifference during the deliverance of the words of command, and at the report of the rifles I could not perceive the smallest motion of any muscle of his face or limbs.

For a moment his position was unchanged, then it swung slowly to the right and remained suspended by the cord, his feet even not having moved an inch. The death of three of them was very much the same as that I have described. The fourth exhibited some slight contortions of the body, but the warriors in his front speedily reloaded their rifles and put a close to the scene. Such was the end of these poor children of the mountains and the forest. Adieu.

On board the Steamer MELTON,
Tennessee River, Dec. 25, 1838.

MY DEAR FATHER:—We embarked at Waterloo last night, Christmas eve, the whole regiment on this fine steamer, and are now cleaving the bright waters of the Tennessee (at the rate of ten knots), under a snow-storm that would not do discredit to the lat. 50 N. But to be acquainted with our movements hitherto, you must be informed that we marched from Fort Cass on the 12th inst. The Colonel, who was a little unwell, preceded us, leaving me to bring on the regiment. We had delightful weather for the march to Kelly's Landing (fifty-one miles), though the nights were a thought too cool for canvas houses. We got along in every respect extremely well, though we had to cross the Tennessee twice on the route. At Kelly's we found the Colonel. Two steamboats had been chartered, and one was already at the landing; the other arrived at night-fall; and the following morning the right wing was put on board the *Harkaway*, under the immediate command of Colonel F., and the left wing embarked on the *Holston* under my command. The waters were so low that we were a week getting to Decatur, being more than half the time aground. The weather was cold and rainy, and we had to unload twice; so that what with exposure and getting out of cabin stores, we had by no means a pleasant voyage. Owing to the Colonel's boat drawing less water than the one I was in, he got to Decatur the day before me, and moved on by the railroad to Tuscumbia. We overtook the right wing the next day at Waterloo.

We have now made about one-fourth of our journey, which from Fort Cass to Fort Gibson is by our present route about sixteen hundred miles. We are, however, now embarked for our legitimate destination, and shall not have any more changes to make before we reach it; provided *always*, that the water in Arkansas River is in good stage.

I have brought my horse and dog safely thus far. The former rises in my estimation as he proceeds in the direction we are going, and several officers have been trying to get him from me. But my intention is to carry him through, as he has proved himself a valuable animal, and is well broken to parade duty. Sport, while sporting too freely on the guards of the *Holston*, pitched into the river and had a good swim to the shore. I stopped the steamer and sent a yawl after him. On his return the officers congratulated him on his good-fortune in belonging to "*the commanding officer*," as the steamer *might not* have been stopped, and the yawl lowered, manned, and sent on shore for a dog of less *rank*.

We are passing Christmas very quietly.—My mind, while not occupied in criticising the efforts of those around me to make "*the day*" *pass merrily*, is agreeably engaged in depicting to my mind's eye the occupations of the dear circle about you.

I must conclude by offering to you all the best wishes of the season. Adieu.

On board the Steamer MELTON, Dec. 29, 1838.

MY DEAR BROTHER:— . . . . Our passage down the river was without accident or incident of interest until we reached the "*Iron banks*," a narrow gorge in the Ohio near its junction with the "*Father of Waters*," where huge masses of rock, piled up to the height of sixty feet on either bank, crowd its waters together, and they force their way between these beetling walls, as it were foaming with rage at being thus checked in their onward course to the Gulf. Such is the aspect presented to the eye in summer; but now another and a very different sight was exhibited,—the gorge was filled nearly to the top of its massive walls with blocks and heavy plates of ice, which effectually stopped our course. It appeared that the river at Pittsburg and above had been early frozen over; afterwards one of those sudden changes of temperature which mark the climate of Pennsylvania as the battle-ground of the north and south winds, had set the ice free and sent it down-stream in accumulated rafts, which now defied our steamer as effectually, for a time at least, as if she had lain locked up in Baffin's Bay.

The Colonel, on consultation with the Captain of the steamer, decided on returning to the little town of Trinity, in Alexander County, Illinois, at the mouth of Cash River, and there encamp until the river should open again. We soon reached this point; but it was now night, and we remained on the steamer till the morning, when we encamped about two hundred yards above the town *in six inches of snow;* there to repose, while the steamer made a pleasant little trip, and, I dare say, a *profitable* one, to Louisville, ostensibly for supplies, and promising to return by the time the gorge would be clear of ice.

In a very short time all the shovels of the command, and many more that were *improvised* for the occasion, were at work clearing away the snow from the ground selected for the camp. The Colonel had pointed out the site for his office-tent, as he wished to report to the authorities at Washington the accidental delay thus imposed upon the regiment on its march. The ground for his tent was soon cleared by the *Pioneers*, the Colonel's pets, who encamped near him, and were always at hand when anything was to be done. The tent was already being raised, when he requested me to go with him on board the steamer about to depart, to attend to some matter. When about half-way to the water, we met Old Burrows, alias *Cut Lane*, puffing along like a great porpoise, when, just as he gave the salute in passing, a good large log caught the quick eye of the Colonel. This log, which had probably lain where it then was for many a year, had so fallen upon the ground that one end as it now lay projected from the bed of snow, its upper surface being still covered, while its larger end was only traceable under the snow. The Colonel turned abruptly and spoke,—

"Burrows! take that log to my office-tent, and tell the corporal to have a fire made at once!"

Hereupon Burrows drew himself up with inimitable dignity, and having coolly measured the length and diameter of this piece of fallen timber with his eye, said in a very serious but still half-comic tone, deprecative,—

"It *might* belong to somebody else, Colonel."

"Pick it up, you rascal, and begone!" growled the Colonel, scarcely able to preserve the gravity of his countenance. Whereupon, the big bugler, with a half groan, half grunt, that might have been heard a hundred yards, shouldered the log and marched off. In haste, farewell.

FORT GIBSON, January, 1839.

P. S.—At the end of ten days, days of very uninteresting import to those encamped in the snow, the steamer arrived with, as the captain assured us, a full supply of provisions; and having steamed down to the Iron Banks, to reconnoitre, returned and reported the gorge free from ice, and the river open. In due season we arrived at Memphis, where the Colonel purposed (being so authorized by the War Department) to leave us and join his family at Baton Rouge, preparatory to bringing them to Fort Gibson. He here, accordingly, issued an order turning over to Captain McCall the command of the regiment, and instructing him, in the event of the water in the Arkansas being at a low stage, as was probable at this season, to bring the regiment to Baton Rouge, there to await the June rise of the Western rivers. This was throwing upon my shoulders a heavy responsibility; for the orders from Washington to proceed to Fort Gibson were pressing in tone, the 7th Regiment, which we were to relieve, being under orders for Florida. I had a high respect for Foster as a soldier of talent, and unyielding determination of character, as well as a warm feeling of personal regard; but on receipt of this order, I determined to carry the regiment through, if among the possibilities of military marches. And as we entered the Arkansas, the captain of the steamer asked me, as if feeling his way, how far I expected him to take us? I replied, "Your contract is to take the regiment to Fort Gibson; and I expect you, and shall require you to take us *there;* and if by any chance that should prove impracticable, you must run your boat hard and fast aground in *the deepest* water in the river, before you get my signature to the fulfilment of your contract, and without that you cannot be paid." No more questions were asked until we reached the city of Little Rock, where we stopped to take in supplies. Here the captain told me he had learned on shore that there was scarcely a chance of our reaching Fort Smith, or Van Buren, (sixty miles this side of Fort Gibson,) and that beyond that point the river was impracticable.

I simply remarked, "We'll see."

As we advanced, we occasionally ran aground, and I sent out our boats to find the channel. At length it became necessary to lighten the boat to enable her to get over the shoals; and I, as the quickest way, landed the regiment, with orders that they in their march keep abreast of the boat. This course was continued for several days, and we made about ten or twelve miles a day. One afternoon, about four o'clock, we ran hard and fast aground, and the boatmen reported they could find no deeper water. This was rather a poser, We had lost one boat the night before, loosed from the stern, whether by accident or design, I could not tell. I, however, ordered the regiment to be brought on board, which was not accomplished till sunset, as we had but a small boat, the yawl having taken leave of us. We lay by that night; and the next morning the small boat had taken French leave, as was soon discovered. The captain stoutly denied any knowledge of the matter; however, I had a staging thrown out to the river-bank, and the regiment was landed. Then a hawser was made fast to a tree, and the force of the engine being applied to the capstan, we were soon afloat again. This day we had to feel our way, and consequently made but about four miles, when about three o'clock P. M. we were again hard and fast aground. This time the steamer was close ashore on the left bank; the regiment was on the right bank, and here the river had expanded to the width of near a quarter of a mile. The afternoon, moreover, was quite cold and hazy. While we on board were resorting to the measures hitherto successful, but now of no avail, the men were getting impatient: they built fires along the bank; and occasionally a little clamor, that I heard without being able to distinguish the meaning, plainly told me they were getting cold and hungry. I felt much concern at our situation, but I sent the mate and one of the hands up the river-bank, with orders to take possession of the first craft they met with, and without further delay commence the transfer of the men to the steamer. In half an hour, I was much relieved by the sight of the mate and his fellow coming down-stream with a small ferry-flat, with which they were striving, by good steering and the aid of the current, to reach the opposite shore. In a short time a cargo of twenty men were on board, and by eight o'clock in the evening, all were comfortably established in their proper abiding-places.

In the morning, an exploring party, in charge of an officer of my command, took the old ferry-flat, and carefully sounding the river, ascertained that we had reached in veritable fact the head of steamboat navigation at the present stage of water. I at once then ordered the Regimental Quartermaster to go on shore, get a horse, and proceed to Fort Gibson, now about thirty miles distant, and request General Arbuckle to send me all his wagons, and to procure as many more from the Cherokees living in the neighborhood of the Fort, as possible; and to return with such means of transportation as he could collect, without delay.

The regiment was landed, and its baggage and subsistence were neatly arranged for the expected train. In the meantime, the engine having proved incapable, with an anchor astern, to move the steamer, I told the captain that, if he would get up good steam on the morrow, and send his hawser ashore, I would take hold of it with the entire regiment and haul him off. Accordingly, the regiment was paraded at an early hour, formed in line alongside of the hawser, while steam was up, and all hands on board at their posts. Old Burrows was at my side; and having learned that all was in readiness on board, I gave the order that the bugler would sound three distinct notes on his bugle, and at the third all hands would give way on the hawser. The bugle sounded, and the men gave way with a shout. The hawser snapped like a pack-thread, and half the regiment lay scrambling on the ground, while the steamer had not budged a peg. I now told the captain to get his best cable ashore, and have everything ready on board, and I would try again to bring him afloat.

The arrangements were all perfected; the bugle sounded; the men gave a tremendous yell, and away came the steamer into floating water, but leaving a plank from her bottom upon the sand-bar. The boat lay here some days for repairs; but I made the captain, who was a partner in the ownership, happy by my certificate that he had fulfilled the contract as far as practicable, and was entitled to payment for the same. On the fifth day at noon, the Quartermaster arrived with a motley train of Government wagons, Indian vehicles of every description under the sun, and several, I should have thought, had never seen the orb of day before. Suffice it, to cut short a letter already too long, to state that we reached the Fort on the second day, and the 7th Regiment marched the next morning on the route by which we had come. Adieu.

FORT GIBSON, JAN. 20, 1840.

MY DEAR FATHER:— . . . . The Secretary of War, in his recent report in allusion to the erection of a new Fort or Picket work near the present one, says, "Due attention will be given to the healthiness of the location."

The climate of the country, I believe, is good; and in order to escape the disease (intermittent fever) which has borne so heavily on the regiment the past season, I am satisfied that all that is necessary is to avoid *local* causes. No more time should be lost in doing this.

The quarters and defences of this monument to the military science of the dark ages—*ycleped*, Fort Gibson, are, in honest truth, bad enough.

The regiment has been principally on *fatigue duty* ever since we came here, patching and repairing; and sooth to say, as fast as we prop them up at one end, they fall down at the other; and when we prop them up at the other end, they *cave in* at the middle.

Last week we had the pleasure of seeing the Reverend Mr. ——, who passed a few days with us, and was entertained at our mess. He is on an extensive tour through the South and West, in search of health, intending to proceed as far as the Colorado of Texas. A graduate of the military academy at West Point, he retains much of the kindred feeling there imbibed; he has since travelled in Europe, and being a man of fine mind, highly cultivated, liberal without affectation, and of a genial temperament softened and regulated by a purely religious sentiment, I do not know when I have met a gentleman with whom I have been so sorry to part after so short an acquaintance,—(I had left West Point before he arrived.)

We have had this month some cold weather. The river has been frozen over, and we have filled the ice-house. It is again pleasant, and I ride for exercise, or shoot, daily. We are all well. Adieu.

[EXTRACT.]

FORT GIBSON, October 29, 1840.

MY DEAR FATHER:—We have lately had a visit from Mr. John Howard Payne, a gentleman of travel and literature, whom you may have seen upon the Philadelphia stage some thirty years ago. He came out to these parts in company with Mr. John Ross, the Cherokee chief, who has lately returned to his people; and states his object to complete a labor he undertook some years ago,—the collecting of materials for a history of the Cherokee Indians, with biographical sketches of their principal men.

Mr. Payne brought me a letter from Colonel Hook, at Washington; so I had him to dinner, and was entertained in return with accounts of his travels, &c., &c.

He told me that in pursuing his inquiries with regard to the Cherokee language, &c., a Mr. Guest, an Indian of intelligence and education, and who could speak English well, was sent for by Ross to meet him. In the course of conversation, Mr. Payne inquired what was the word in the Cherokee language which signified a brass kettle. Mr. Guest told him. The next day, while again conversing upon the subject of language, he inquired what word represented the Great Spirit. The Indian gave him the same one which he had given him the day before for the brass kettle. This caused Mr. Payne inadvertently to smile; at which the old gentleman was so much offended that he remained silent, and could not be induced to answer any further questions. I am called away, so I must bid you farewell.

FORT GIBSON, April 1, 1841.

MY DEAR BROTHER:— . . . We are still getting on very smoothly, without much to commend or much to condemn in the government of the regiment. If we have had no memorable enjoyments to record, we have had few *contretemps* to regret. Nothing has lately transpired indicating a fixedness of purpose in the Head of the War Department to carry out what was strongly recommended by that functionary a year or more ago, with respect to the abandonment of this old tumble-down man-trap, and the building of a new fort or cantonment on the hills above us. There is no necessity, *now*, for shutting the men up in pickets, as there is no enemy at all likely to trouble us between Philadelphia and the Rocky Mountains. There is timber abundant within easy reach along the banks of the Neosho and the Arkansas, from which (the latter) we are but little over a mile; and the troops themselves could build good quarters on some one of the airy sites here commanding fine views, where pure air and good water would insure the health of the command. By the by, there is a good *water* story told about General Arbuckle and the 7th Regiment, that happened before we came here, and which ought not to be lost.

The General, who is the Colonel of the 7th and "*Brigadier-General by Brevet, for ten years' faithful service in the same grade,*" was in the habit of putting one half his regiment on a little hill just over the head of his fort, during the heat of summer. And these men had to carry their water up to their camp from the only well at the post, which was on the flat near the fort.

This excellent old gentleman, the General, being rather slow in maturing his ideas, and if possible still slower in carrying them into effect, conceived the *projet*, a benevolent one truly, of sparing the men this labor, (for they hauled the water up the hill in hand-carts,) by sinking a well in the centre of their camp. And the *officer of the day* was directed to employ two of the guard-house prisoners (*i. e.*, soldiers who for some more serious offence had been sentenced by court martial to confinement at hard labor) at this work. At first the work went on very well. I should have mentioned though, that it had been commenced just at the close of the encampment of 1837, when the complaints of the troops there encamped during the hot season had at length roused the General to the point of giving the order. The officer of the day was also required to report progress during his tour. At first, the report would be two or three feet, then a foot or ten inches; and so it went on during the winter, the officer merely inquiring of the prisoners, who were suffered to go to work without a guard, how many feet or inches they had advanced towards the centre of the earth, and their statement was entered in his report. The summer of 1838 arrived, without the prisoners having reached water; and the troops expressed to the General their preference to remain in the Fort, rather than to be obliged to drag the water up the hill. The good old General acceded to their request, but ordered the prisoners to push their work and get to water before the summer had reached the *dog-days*. The work went on, and the prisoners reported daily that they had gone down so many feet and so many inches within that officer's tour, who entered on his report whatever they declared to be the amount of their work.

Time passed, and the summer had drawn to a close, when one bright October day it occurred to the General that the prisoners must have reached the level of the river-bottom, and it was strange, it was very strange they had not come to water. So he called his Aide-de-Camp and requested him to examine the guard-reports, and see how deep the well was. The Aide-de-Camp, after some time, returned with his hands full of papers, and informed the astonished General that, according to the daily reports which he had carefully summed up, the well *was four hundred and sixty-five feet and nine inches deep*. Whereupon the General called aloud to his Orderly, and told him in a somewhat excited voice to find the Officer of the Day, and with his compliments to request him to report at Headquarters immediately. The officer appeared, and the General desired him to visit the well and ascertain, by descending it, the depth to which it had been sunk. The former, taking with him the corporal of the guard to lower him into this profound deep, hastened to what was now an unfrequented spot. On reaching the place which was indicated by the windlass, the corporal seized the handle, and with a few short turns the bucket appeared; the officer boldly entered it and prepared for the descent. What was his surprise, when at the depth of fifteen feet he landed on a flat rock, which covered what he soon found out was the BOTTOM of the well, upon which the two prisoners were seated face to face, with a pack of cards between them, a-playing "*Old Sledge.*" The facts are explained in a few words.—When the prisoners had reached the depth above stated, they came to a large gneiss rock upon which it was rather tiresome picking; and as they found the temperature a pleasant one—cool in summer, and moderate and free from the winds of winter, and as they always brought their dinners and a jug of water with them, it was quite an agreeable, snug little place to pass the day playing Old Sledge or All Fours. The thing was carried on so skilfully by these fellows, that, together with a little remissness on the part of their superiors, the game had been successfully played for eighteen months. The hit was too palpable; the well was abandoned, but its vestiges are perceptible at the present day.

My chief amusement of a physical character (I still retain my love for reading, and we have a pretty good Regimental Library) is partridge and grouse shooting; both are abundant and afford excellent sport. Colonel Richard B. Mason, of the 2d Dragoons, who has two squadrons hutted about half a mile from the Fort, is an ardent sportsman. He has some fine dogs, and I have shot with him a great deal. A spirit of rivalry springing up, we agreed that, when we stopped shooting in the evening, we should empty our pockets on the grass and count the birds. It was remarkable enough, that, when we shot from twenty to thirty birds a day, we never on any single occasion differed more than *two* birds, and, remarkable as it may appear, it was not a *general* thing but almost a *constant* one that we counted the *same number* of birds each. I kept a register from the first of September of last year to the first of March this year, during which period we shot together, on an average, twice a week; and the difference between us was only two partridges and two grouse; — there never was during all this time an unkind or hasty expression passed between us. Adieu.

FORT GIBSON, August 3, 1841.

MY DEAR BROTHER: — . . . For near a fortnight past we have had in session a General Court Martial for the trial of Guard-House prisoners; the hours are from 9 A.M. till 3 P.M., and the weather has been intolerably hot. Our court-room is anything but an air-alluring apartment, — on the contrary, it is one of the most unattractive, uninviting abodes of even-handed justice that ever a lost volume of uncontaminated atmosphere found its way into. It is on the western face of this redoubtable work, and in the second story, separating the quarters of the *enlisted* men from those of the officers on that face. It does not extend through the building from west to east, the latter portion of its fair proportions being curtailed to accommodate a stairway, except by which there is no legitimate approach to this unventilated hall of justice.

Yesterday, during a recess, Colonel Mason, who is the

President of the Court, asked me whether I had been out to look after the young grouse? (We do not begin to shoot regularly before the first of September.) I replied, that, besides being unwilling to encounter the broiling sun in August, I had been equally unwilling to expose my horse yet to the pestilent prairie-fly; but since the subject had been called to mind, I would ride out towards evening and take a look at the prairie. Accordingly, after dinner, I mounted my horse, and with Sport galloped out about five miles, and found several young packs, but not large enough for shooting. Making a detour, in order to return by a different route, I came upon a pack consisting of the hen and ten young birds, full three-fourths grown, at a distance of about four miles from the Fort. I did not disturb them after the first flight, but galloped home, determined to knock up their quarters in the early morn. I had taken the landmarks very carefully, and although the ground was at least two miles from the nearest woodland, I felt very confident of finding them in the morning. At the supper-table, some one asked if I had seen many grouse. I replied, that I had found a good many little fellows for September shooting, and about four miles from the Fort, a pack of eleven nearly grown; and added, laughing, that I had penned them up, and intended in the morning to bring them in. On the morrow, I was up before there was any light except that shed by the stars, and my shooting pony and Sport being in readiness at the door, I mounted and made my way into the broad plain. While I am galloping on toward the southwest, guided by the stars, I may tell you that my hunting-pony, which I call "*Dumpling,*" is a little fellow of thirteen and a half hands, very broad and strong-limbed; and can gallop, as jockeys say, "*all day.*" At any time that a snap-shot may offer, I drop the reins, and he stands like a rock, no matter at what gait I might have been riding. But when

I come upon a covey, or a pack of grouse, I usually *cast anchor* and dismount. As this may require a little explanation, I must whisper in your ear. A little iron anchor with three sharp-pointed flukes, is fastened to the end of my lariat, and when not in use, is slipped under the head-stall of my horse between his ears, where it rests securely until wanted; when thrown upon the ground, the pointed flukes catching among the grass-roots, prevent his wandering. But, hark! there is the morning-gun; it comes to my ear with a heavy, booming sound, over the damp, dewy plain; but it announces to the inmates of the Fort that the day approaches, and with it their labors must begin. I am already nearly three miles from the Fort, and as the light increases, I begin faintly to distinguish my landmarks, and spurring on my little charger, I steer with confidence for the ground where I left my little pack of pinnated fowl. Now, look there! just as the sun raises his forehead above that swell in the eastern prairie's slope, Sport, who has always kept a little in advance, draws carefully to the southward. He walks boldly forward, with head erect, and tail straightened and stiff, about one hundred yards. I check my pony, and sit with admiring and loving eyes fixed upon my dog, until he takes his stand as rigid as a statue. I then dismount and walk freely up. At the word "*forward,*" Sport bounds among them, and the rustling of wings accompanies the sudden appearance of eleven noble birds. I had time to count them before I raised my gun; both barrels rang out in quick succession, and the old hen and a fine young cock, singled from the pack, rolled upon the grass. The others did not fly over one hundred yards. Having loaded, I walked up, Sport deliberately made his *point;* the birds rose with strong wing, and two more fell at the crack of my double barrel.

In this way, at four double shots, I got eight birds;

the other three gave me rather more trouble; they separated a little, but with a dog of Sport's nose, that was but of little moment. Three single shots finished the pack. The work had occupied rather more than a half-hour. Then the birds, which while I shot were stowed in the capacious pockets of my summer shooting-coat, were now strung by the femoral sinew to my saddle, and hung on the croup, five and six aside, *to keep the balance true*, or nearly so. This matter being disposed of, I mounted Dumpling, and putting spur, was soon on my way home at a rattling rate, Sport gambolling in front, and crowing in the best humor imaginable. As I rode up to the Adjutant's office — the *Exchange*—at this hour, where officers meet to look on at the Guard-mounting, and talk over the news of the day, there were a good many officers, Indians, and others collected. Some one asked Lieutenant Wickliff, "How many birds has McCall?" He answered, directly, "*Eleven*." I asked him how he knew it? He replied, that before breakfast he had ridden out some miles to breathe the air and get an appetite; that he had heard me fire and had counted the shots, (the report of a fowling-piece on the prairie, when the air is still, as in the early day, may be heard a long way.) He then called to the Seminole chief, "*Holata-Emathla*," who was standing near me, to count the birds. The old chief, who had been a friend and comrade of mine years agone in Florida, advanced smiling, counted the birds, and cried out, "*palihumpkin,—eleven*."

It was then just eight o'clock. I rode to my quarters, dressed, breakfasted, and was in the Court-room at nine o'clock.

What will your Philadelphia sportsmen say to that?

FORT BROOKE, Tampa Bay, Sept. 30, 1841.

MY DEAR FATHER:—As I have heretofore written to you, the 4th Regiment received late orders last month, to proceed without unnecessary delay to Florida, to relieve some artillery detachments that were wanted on the Atlantic coast, from Charleston to Augusta, Me. We had a fair passage down the Arkansas River, and thence by the Mississippi to New Orleans, where we embarked in a fine ship, last from Havre, which had just discharged her cargo. The Captain had many good things still in his store-room, having brought a number of passengers from La Belle France. Among his foreign stores, nothing attracted my attention more than the *Beet-sugar;* the other luxuries with which his table was bountifully supplied, are too common in all our seaports to be remarkable. But the loaf-sugar made from the large beet, though beautifully crystallized, had, I thought, a peculiar flavor, differing from that of the *cane-sugar* of our own country, which I did not at first like, though after a little while the difference was scarcely perceptible. We reached the entrance of Espiritu Santo without casualty worthy of notice, and were there transferred from our mammoth ship, which drew some thirteen feet, to Government tenders, which brought us safely to the dock here. The regiment lay in camp outside the pickets, with the 6th and 8th Regiments, until Colonel Worth's plan of campaign should be matured, and an advance to the South, where the enemy was reported to be in force, might be ordered.

Fort Brooke, October 25.

My dear Father: — Orders were issued yesterday for the advance, and we shall be in motion to-morrow. No mail has left since our arrival, — rather a long interval, — and I shall leave my letters here to be forwarded by the first vessel bound to New Orleans.

There is nothing new. The troops are healthy, and will march in fine spirits. The weather is charming as usual. Love to all. Adieu.

Camp — 20 miles within the Great Cypress,
December 14, 1841.

My dear Father: — An Indian arriving express from the Post on the Carlos-a-hatchee, brought me yesterday a most acceptable package of letters which followed me from Fort Gibson to a point where, I will venture to say, you little thought at the time of writing, one of your epistles would ever penetrate.

We marched from the Carlos-a-hatchee on the 3d inst., with eleven companies of the 4th, 6th, and 8th Regiments, and two companies of Dragoons, carrying with us provision for fifteen days. Colonel Worth accompanied the expedition about thirty miles to the edge of the "*Big Cypress* Swamp," where he took leave of us, delivering the command to Major Belknap. It was at first the Colonel's intention to advance on the Cypress, which runs nearly north-east and south-west across the peninsula, (about thirty miles south of the Carlos-a-hatchee,) in three columns, of one of which I was to have had the command; but owing to the difficulty of penetrating the country by any route but the old Indian trail, he decided on advancing in one column, and dividing the forces into two columns after reaching the Cypress;

where, at last accounts, the Indians were secreted on islands supposed to be inaccessible to the troops. We accordingly marched in one column under Major Belknap, the right wing being commanded by Major Graham of the 4th, and the left by myself, (two or three senior captains having been left, with their own companies only, in command of Subsistence Depots.) This arrangement gave me a horse—a fine, active animal—from one of the dragoon companies. We had scarcely advanced out of sight of our Post, before we got into water, and were seldom out of it again for two days and a half, when we reached the Cypress. Thus far we had passed through a pine and palmetto country with firm sand bottom. Our progress was slow as we marched through water from six inches to two feet in depth. We passed occasional swells in the land that were not under water; these (though rather of the moistest) served for resting-places, and sometimes for encamping-grounds, when no *dry land* was to be found.

At length we encamped on a little pine island, on the threshold of the formidable, the horridly gloomy-looking Cypress, into which we were to plunge the next morning with the determination to make our way to the abiding-places of the long-hunted and now hard-pressed Seminoles. No troops had ever yet penetrated more than skin-deep into this last refuge of the savage. The island, on which the Council was held last summer, at which it was resolved to put to death any man who proposed peace, we were told by the guides was thirty miles south-east, near the centre of the Big Cypress; and that there we should find the Prophet's band. To reach this island, to fight and capture this band, and to return, ten days' rations would be necessary; [a soldier cannot well carry more than five, in addition to his arms, with sixty rounds of ball-cartridge, &c., &c.;] and it was now ascertained that pack-mules could be forced through by but one route. Again the plan of separate columns had to be abandoned, and we entered this gloomy domain together. The first step was knee-deep; but suffice it to say, that in two and a half days, sometimes putting six men to each mule to drag him through a bog, we reached this place, a distance of twenty miles.

Here we found a good pine island to encamp on; but here also we were told by the Indian guides, that neither horse nor mule could go further. The Prophet's Island lay about eight miles due south, and there was another settlement of a few families to the westward, five miles.

The next morning, Major Graham was ordered to march with two companies to the latter point,—while Major Belknap moved with the remaining six companies for the former. We had a terrible swamp to pass through; but on arriving within a mile of the spot, the Major divided his force, giving me, besides my own company, one of the 6th Regiment, under Lieutenant Emory, and one of the 8th Regiment, under Captain McKavett. Here we separated, he eastwardly, I westwardly, so as, if possible, completely to surround the island. But, alas! the bird had flown; we found nothing but the corn and pumpkin fields, and the deserted lodges;—from all appearances, they had been abandoned near a month. We encamped on the island, and had a good supper on roasted pumpkins. The next morning I took forty men of my company for an exploring party. I steered south, and after wading about two miles, came in sight of a live-oak hummock, lying eastwardly; for this I steered, and soon saw signs of Indians.

After an hour's wandering through the tall brush and brier, often having to cut my way, I found a settlement of four lodges, with a corn and pumpkin field, but apparently as long abandoned as the others. We, however, found the track of Indians, who had been there on a visit about ten days previous. None of our guides knew anything of the country south of the Prophet's Town; but my guide no sooner saw the track and was told to follow it, than with the wonderful skill of his race, he carried me across the island in a southerly course, where the Indians had again taken to the Cypress and had gone south. Through many parts of the Cypress here, there grows in the water a long grass, which, when pressed down by a person in passing, does not rise again, and thus leaves a very plain trail. I followed this trail for some miles, when it led me to a small wet prairie. Here the party had separated for the purpose of leaving no trail on ground comparatively dry; but the guide soon found and pointed out to me the footprints of six men and one woman who had walked here abreast and about three yards apart; again, when they came to water they came together. After some time I came to another and larger prairie, alternately dry and wet, having on the east in the distance a large live-oak hummock, on the south a formidable cypress, and on the west strips of pine woods. Here we pressed hot upon the trail, and the guide expressed his belief that the Prophet could not be many miles off, judging from the appearance of the country. But we had not gone far before the guide discovered that they had been playing a deep game, which is managed in this way: — When they wish to conceal their abode, their approach to it is never direct, and perhaps often leading you by a plain trail past it; the foremost of the party will, by making a high, long step over the top of the grass to the right or left, light upon the toe only, and step by step carefully arranging the grass thus disturbed, make his escape; his absence will scarcely be observed upon the trail, and the one who succeeds him as leader, pursues the route for some hundred yards, when he makes his escape in like manner; and so on, till but one is left, and he also continues the direct course, till deep water, a thicket, a rock, or something of the kind, affords him also an opportunity to escape, and the most skilful in this accomplishment brings up the rear.

This game was successfully played in this case, the last one being a man with a very large foot (for an Indian). He led us to a deep pond, where among the rocks he gave the slip to all pursuers. We searched around the pond, but could not discover a trace of where he had left it.

I then determined to search the hummock on the left, and after some difficulty we made our way into it and searched for a considerable distance. Here also we found a pumpkin-field, but no recent signs. Here let me mention that in this region the pumpkins bear all the year round. We have always found them on the vines in every stage, from the blossom to maturity; and so it is said they continue till spring, when the vine does not die, but new leaves cast off the old ones; it begins to run rapidly, and soon recommences to blossom. It is said the same vine continues in this way to bear for many years.

But to return to my excursion. I continued my profitless search till near night, when I returned to the village and slept well. On this occasion, having no transportation, each officer carried his own blanket and his provisions. The only change of clothes I took was a flannel shirt and a pair of socks. Our rations being consumed, we were compelled to return to this point, where we had left what had remained to us. On our arrival we found Graham had come in the day before, having like ourselves been disappointed.

It is thought, however, the Indians are somewhere down there still; and as we expect a supply of rations to-morrow, we shall set out with as much as we can properly carry, and penetrate, if possible, to the end of the land.

I never was in better health, notwithstanding the exposure, without tents, one blanket, and the same clothes to sleep in at night that one has waded in all day.

The express who carries this letter will soon set out; I must therefore bid you farewell until we return from the proposed scout, which, I trust, will be more successful.

Big Cypress Swamp, Fla.,
Depot No. 1, Dec. 25, 1841.

My dear Brother: — "*Me voici*," reclining at full length upon my *only blanket*, which is spread upon a bed of deep-green palmetto-leaves, and guiding the pen as well as may be in that position, to say how sincerely I wish you all a "Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and many, many returns of this season of gratulation."

My last letter, which, if I recollect right, was dated about the 14th, gave you some account of our first scout, wherein I informed you that, after finding that the Prophet had abandoned his village and fields, which were snugly ensconced in a heavy cypress swamp, the island on which he had established himself containing about thirty acres of very rich land, and being surrounded by a deep boggy girdle, where the water was nearly waist-deep, I made a little excursion still further south, with a part of my company, and found a trail, which, after following it some miles, I lost, having only the satisfaction of knowing that I had penetrated some distance to the southward of any other white man. However, my report to the commanding officer had the effect to change the whole plan of campaign in this quarter. For concurrent intelligence received by him while I was out, had led to the belief that the Indians had abandoned their strong-holds in the cypress and gone to the Okeechobee, and he had during the day dispatched to Colonel Worth an express, saying, that he should break up his depots hereabouts and proceed northwardly. I protested, modestly, against this course. I told him, that what I had seen that day only convinced me that we knew positively nothing of the country as yet; that the country began to change its features as I progressed to the south; becoming clearer, and interspersed with more frequent patches of pine and savannah land; that in my front, at the time I lost the trail, lay an enormous mass of dense and heavy cypress, on the farther side of which would probably be found a stretch of country as distinctly marked as itself, and of opposite character, that is, of an aspect as favorable as this is dense and forbidding; for such are the freaks dame Nature has played in this unparalleled region; and that, such being the case, there we should assuredly find the Indians. At any rate, it was worth the labor to explore it before we left the South. And so it was decided on that night; and the following morning we retraced our steps to our camp (Depot No. 3), and counter-communications were forwarded for a further supply of provisions. In forty-eight hours we got six days' supply, with which, and one day's supply on hand, we set out to seek adventures. Five days' rations of hard bread and meat, with sixty rounds of ball-cartridges, blanket, &c., &c., is as much as a soldier can move comfortably with on good roads. We, however, took seven days, not knowing how far we might be led. Thus, each officer was compelled to say to himself, "Now must I determine to regulate my appetite according to the strength of my shoulders, or, at least, by the burden I am willing to oppress them withal;" for horse or mule could not pass four hundred yards beyond our depot.

Thus equipped, we took up our line of march in three columns, (each column moving in Indian file,) the centre commanded by Maj. Belknap, the right by Major Graham, and the left by myself. Our course was south. On the second day, when we arrived at the ground where my guide had lost the trail, the search was renewed, but without success. We continued to coast the immense cypress, I have before spoken of, through a varied growth of small cypress, pine, and scrub, in the hope of striking the same trail. In a few hours we found the trail of three men, two women, and two children, which, on reaching the large cypress, continued to coast it. We followed until it was time to encamp, which we did on *rather* damp ground. After a cold, sleepless night, we again resumed the trail, determined to follow it, although some ten days old at the least, until it conducted us to the grand rendezvous, which was probable, or until we overtook the party and then compelled them to lead us thither. You must recollect we had been marching two entire days through a country entirely under water, except occasional small islands of from one to two or three acres. Soon after we started, the third morning, the air being cold enough to make one's fingers tingle, our trail turned into the Big Cypress, and we stepped from water ankle-deep to water knee-deep, and which after some time reached our waist-bands. In a dark cypress like this, where the direct and cheering ray of the sun never finds its way, the water is proportionably colder, and for five mortal hours, by watch, did we toil through this water, never less than knee-deep, without finding a resting-place, except once for a short time we contrived to cluster on a little island one hundred yards square, which halt was not included in the five hours marching-time. You cannot form the most remote idea of the region we passed through, and which the Indians doubtless thought would prove an impassable barrier. The bottom was boggy, and the water was filled with old logs, snags, cypress-knees, and vines innumerable. The cypress, of towering height, was intermingled with cabbage-trees of several distinct species;—the whole were covered with millions and myriads of "*air-plants*," some budding—some in bloom—some in seed. I counted nine or ten species, some extravagantly curious—some singularly beautiful. But the most wonderful of all is a vine, which fastens itself upon the cypress, and forming a kind of network around the gigantic trunk, the different branches where they cross each other not merely interlacing, but actually incorporating, (for they are covered by but one bark in that connection, as wonderful as it may appear), and so continuing to ascend the leafless shaft, until they reach the top, when, wonder of wonders, these vines all unite, incorporate, and become a tree which in some instances, with a trunk larger than my body, rises some twenty feet above the cypress, and is in shape, in the color of its bark, and in the leaf, which is a deep-green, like the bay-tree. In gazing round at all these new sights, I frequently came near pitching over a log, head foremost, into the water. At length we got through, passed a narrow skirt of dry pine land, and then came to a wet prairie; thus we followed the trail until night, when we found good encamping-ground.

The third day, after crossing the prairie, we came to a second cypress, little inferior in width and nothing in depth to the other; this we passed also, and then came into a different country. There was more pine timber and less water. Here we found tolerable ground for sleeping on. By the by, I should have mentioned that we had been constantly gaining in the chase, passing sometimes two, sometimes three of their encampments in a day.

It was a sad reflection that their appearance called up. To what extremities must the poor wretches have been driven, when they sought such a country as a refuge! The alligator, sometimes a crane, and the cabbage-tree, it was apparent from the relics that remained from their supper, were their only food. The fourth day we continued the pursuit, our guides never at a loss in tracing or rather trailing, and through a country still improving, though a couple of hundred yards brought us into water more or less deep, through which we marched the greater part of this day. We had been making something of a semicircle in our course, (writing in this position is getting confoundedly tiresome, and I must make short work of my narrative,) — we had gone south for a day or two nearly to the Mangroves, which border the big waters, and then westwardly. We resumed the trail the fifth day at sunrise as usual. The signs became fresher, and we were pushing on with vigor, being assured by our guides that before night they would bring us to the acquaintance of Indians, be they more or less in number. But we had not indulged this hope long, before the stillness and silence with which our march had been conducted, was broken in upon by a musket-shot, at some distance to the left. This brought us to a halt, and it was soon ascertained that one of the flankers of Major Graham's column, which was that day on the left, was missing. A second and a third shot soon told us that the man was lost, and a party, with an Indian, was sent after him. But the chief guide at once pronounced the game up. He said that the Indians could not be more than three or four miles ahead of us, and that a surprise was now out of the question, and their escape was certain. At length the culprit was brought up — a scoundrel Irishman, who, in momentary alarm of being left alone in the wilderness, had by his folly and rashness destroyed the hopes of many days, during which we had undergone such toil and exposure. There was but one cry — "Shoot him!" He was punished, though not as he certainly deserved.

Again we proceeded — entered a deeper cypress, and the guides, five in number, shortly after requested that they might fall to rear of the advance-guard, as we should soon be upon the enemy; it was impossible for them to say whether they would fight or flee. This was done; and thus we proceeded between two and three miles, when, sure enough, the rifle's crack was followed by the war-whoop. A sergeant and one private of the advance fell dead. The heads of columns were at that instant entering a deep *lily-pond* in the cypress, the advance about half-way across it. I was that day leading the centre column, and at the moment immediately in rear of the advance. I gave the word "*forward*,"—my own company, which was with me, answered the whoop with a shout of defiance and rushed on. We struggled through the water to the live-oak hummock from which the Indians fired—gained dry land, and routed them before more than a third of their number discharged their rifles. Some shots were fired at the scoundrels as our men saw the bushes move, but without success. Here I was joined by two companies of the 8th Regiment, which with my own constituted my column; the pursuit was then commenced, as soon as the men could be so extended as to cover a wide front. We found ourselves in a dry hummock which now became comparatively open. It is needless to say the pursuit was vain. They would not rally, and I soon found the country became so clear of brush as to preclude the hope of their so doing. At this time too I was recalled. In returning I struck a trail which bore off to the right. Following this, I was led to the village which had been abandoned that morning, and the women and children sent off; Graham having returned from a like fruitless pursuit to the left, in which direction some of the enemy had retired. They were computed at about fifty strong, and would have been surprised with their women and children in the village, had not the Irishman betrayed our approach by firing his gun. The sun was now getting low, and the guides declared nothing more could be done that night. The next morning it was ascertained that the Indians had fled in the opposite direction from our depot; we could expect to do nothing in less than two or three days' pursuit, and we were in a direct line already three days' march from camp, and with but a scant supply for two days. Galling as this was, we were compelled to steer our course homewards. This place being nearer than the depot we left, we marched for it, and arrived yesterday, a little hungry, some of the men having been two days without bread. We are all in good health, however, and shall try it again on the 27th inst.; perhaps better luck next time.

Altogether, it is thought to have been the roughest and most fatiguing scout perhaps ever made in Florida.

CAMP DOANE — BIG CYPRESS, January 16, 1842.

MY DEAR M——: I wrote to my brother on Christmas-day, and gave quite a long account of our movements. Two days afterwards we broke up the depot at that point and marched hither; establishing also another some sixteen miles lower down. Here we remained one day refitting, and the following, having left one company of the 8th Regiment in charge of the supplies, we marched some sixteen miles further south, taking with us the mules lightly packed, which we succeeded in getting through the swamps. Here, however, was the *ultima-thule* of our faithful beasts of burden, and we were left to the stoutness of our own backs and shoulders for the further transportation of our bedding and provisions. The next morning, four divisions, of two companies each, marched in different directions with six days' rations. To give you some idea of the country, I must tell you the mainland terminates at Cape Roman, all the southern portion of the peninsula laid down on the maps being but a vast conglomeration of islands of all sorts, sizes, and descriptions,—some being entirely sterile, others covered with *Black Mangrove* trees, (which is by far the largest class,) others again, with pine, cabbage-trees, or live-oak, while some are of a wild mixture of all four. The general character of the mainland south of Carlos-a-hatchee is one vast plain of scrub-cypress and stunted pine, all under water, from three to twelve inches, intersected by numerous deep channels and heavy cypress-swamps, dotted with small islands or dry spots of cabbage-tree and pine, with here and there a large dry hummock, or long pine ridge. Well, our four divisions marched in the directions designated; but before I had got well established on my course, having come to a dense and wet scrub, the three Indians who had been allotted to me as guides, declined to lead the way, although no hostile aspect lay before them; and their conduct on the occasion satisfied me that I could not place the slightest dependence on their assistance in following a trail, should I strike one, when the slightest chance of meeting an enemy was probable. I was accordingly compelled to take my pocket-compass and take the direct course through all obstacles; which, with the aid of a heavy hunting-knife, I effected *through tangled juniper, beds of reeds, &c.* But it is idle to relate the annoyances constantly occurring from a total want of knowledge of the country, and a treacherous want of assistance from guides on whom one is told to rely. But I pushed on, and at last struck a trail of three men, when I brought the Indians to the front, and compelled them to follow it.

This I was soon satisfied was—as they told me at first—the track of some of the men who had fired on us on a former scout. Knowing it was useless to follow a trail ten days old, and believing, as I had been told, that we should find fresh signs near Malco River, I left the trail and pushed on. In a short time I met Graham and McKavett, and we went together to Malco. On meeting these officers, they told me of the same treachery and rascality on the part of the guides, — that, in fact, they had been useless. I then proposed to Major Graham that we should bring the Indians together and settle the point at once. After pushing the chief home, he candidly acknowledged they had determined not to expose themselves to be shot in ambush, and would not hunt out trails any longer, unless the three columns marched together, and so disposed themselves as to protect entirely the body of guides, ten in number, from surprise and assault. All acknowledging it useless to proceed singly, we determined to return in three separate, but nearly contiguous columns, each column presenting a broad front, with an advance on either flank, so as to afford perfect security to the Indians. In this way we returned, making a wide sweep to the west; and thus in our way down and back, having passed through all the worst country between this post and the Mangroves, without meeting with Indians or seeing a "single fresh sign." We were all then satisfied that the Indians had retreated to the Mangrove Islands, and Colonel Worth was advised to fit out a boat expedition to the Mangroves, to start from Tampa. In the meantime, however, to render assurance doubly sure, another scout in somewhat the same direction was decided on. But forty days constant marching through mud and water, exposure to the heavy dews, without tents, and at times a scarcity of food, had laid our force of eleven hundred men upon the shelf. Eleven hundred men against a handful of savages! you will say, how ignoble and pitiful a service! And so it is. But we have a great extent of country to cover at the same time, and we have to follow the flying savage into fastnesses in which the wolf would starve. However, when the thing was decided on, it was found, on examination, that out of all the companies present, eight hundred men, we could muster but *two hundred men* fit for field duty; disease, and the wear and tear incidental to the exposure of the *physicals* in such a country as this, having rendered the remainder incapable of active service. These two hundred men were organized, forming four companies of fifty men each, two of which were placed under my command, and two under Captain Screven, and the command of the two divisions given to Major Graham, with orders to separate or keep united, as circumstances might require. As the officers were broken down pretty much in the same ratio with the men, two to each company was all we could muster. (Here let me remark, my own health has been and continues to be excellent). However, we had no occasion to separate, having traversed a great range of country without seeing a sign of an Indian. We returned night before last, having been absent seven days—and being fully satisfied there is not an Indian on this side of the Mangroves.

A boating expedition has started for the Mangroves, and we are waiting to see whether they will drive the Indians this way or round to the Everglades. God speed us to a termination of our disgusting, but arduous, and I fear thankless toils.

Some drops of rain have found their way through my palmetto shed upon my paper, which warns me to close the letter before it is obliterated by the evening shower. In addition to this, my position is anything but elegant or comfortable, I therefore bid you a good-night.

FORT BROOKE, TAMPA, Feb. 27, 1842.

MY DEAR E——: Give me joy: I am out of the "Big Cypress" at last; and in good health.

Now, then, let me thank you for your kind letter which reached me in the *Pays Bas*, and which I should have answered at the time, but that I had nothing of interest to impart, and was withal either much occupied with military matters, or felt too tired and out of heart to take up the pen. But I grasp now with a hard and sun-burnt hand the quill I plucked from the wing of a Wood Ibis (*Tantalus loculator*) I shot on the "*Thath-lo-popka-hatchee*," or "*Fish-eating creek*," a tributary to the waters of "*Okee-cho-bee*," or "*Big Water lake*," some days ago on the march hither. As this same bird afforded me a good dinner, supper, and breakfast, and as its name and character may not be familiar to an inhabitant of the Middle States, I must tell you it is quite a large bird, being about forty inches long, from the tip of the bill to the end of the tail, and sixty inches from tip to tip of the extended wings, with a long (nine-inch) curved bill. Its color is whitish, with black tail and quill-feathers. The body is nearly as large as that of a goose, with well-developed breast, and on the table, as I thought at the time, was not in tenderness and delicacy of flavor very inferior to your celebrated wood-cock, and like that bird it indulges in rather a promiscuous diet; but instead of worms and other soft insects, together with snails and leeches, which the wood-cock greedily devours, the Wood Ibis swallows frogs and other small reptiles, and, it is said by our guides, sometimes young alligators, though of this I am inclined to be sceptical, since I made that dainty repast upon its flesh. My appreciation of its excellence on that occasion may have been influenced, perhaps, by the fact that I had eaten nothing more palatable for some months past than strong, salt pork. But with my Ibis pen let me inform you, that since my last letter, which was written something more than a month ago, I have been employed on duties pretty similar to those therein detailed, though of less laborious character. Leaving the watery deserts, I reached Fort Fanning on the 25th

January. The Indians having been driven from the south and east, had (some of them) sought refuge in the scrubs and hummocks around *Is-tok-po-ga Lake*, and thither we marched, crossing the *Carlos-a-hatchee* near its source, and steering northwardly. We were now, however, entering a country in which horses could be used, and from that time I had one at my command. But the idea of *catching* Indians even here was looked upon as perfectly ridiculous. They have become wilder and more vigilant than the beasts of the forest, and show more caution and sagacity in moving and concealing their wives and children than does the wild deer towards her fawn. A wiser and more humane policy was adopted; the troops were marched to the vicinity of the district known to be their abode, and then some friendly Indians were induced by *heavy* bribes to venture forward and throw themselves in the way of their former friends,—an undertaking perilous in the extreme,—and if admitted to a talk, instead of being shot down, to endeavor by persuasion and large promises to induce them to come in; at the same time to assure them that the troops would continue the chase to the very last, in case of refusal.

The hour was propitious; they were found much harassed and broken down in spirit and in body. The women, who throughout the war have displayed more than Spartan heroism, now wept and implored their husbands to yield to the entreaties of the envoys. Three days and sleepless nights were passed in combating the resolution never to leave Florida. But the ladies at length (as is always the case) prevailed, and Assinoah, the chief, consented to come in. They have been allowed some time to collect the aged and infirm, which with the household-gods are carefully bestowed in distant, secret places, and then to march to *Camp McCall* on the Peas Creek, where I left Maj. Belknap some days ago, awaiting their arrival. I was ordered here with my company, which with one other of the 4th Regiment now constitutes the garrison of this place. Four companies of our regiment will probably be here during the summer. The 6th Regiment has left for Jefferson Barracks, and the 2d Infantry and 3d Artillery will go in a month or two to the North or East. All this, you see, is favorable to the closing of the war. If Assinoah comes in, he will bring in about 120 souls, and then there will be but 190 or 200 left. When our regiment will get out, and where we shall go, I can form no conjecture.

I must go to bed, *for now I have a bed!* I slept last night in a bed, and in a house for the first time since I left Fort Gibson on the 15th September last. God bless you. G. A. McC.

P. S.—As the transport which is to carry the mail will be detained till to-morrow, I will give you a resumé of our late campaign.

We marched to the Big Cypress, a most formidable swamp, extending diagonally across the peninsula from northeast to southwest, seventy-five miles, with an average width of thirty miles. The troops numbered eight hundred men, and were commanded by Major William G. Belknap, 8th Infantry. The campaign lasted fifty-two days, during which period we made seven explorations of its depth, or, as they were called, "scouts," averaging seven days each; in other words, we were marching through water from six inches to three feet deep, forty-eight days. Three times we passed entirely through or across its widest parts. On the seventh scout, no more than two hundred men of the eight hundred could be mustered for duty; fevers, diarrhœas, and swollen feet and ankles—the latter attributed by the surgeons to constant marching in the water—having laid up in the hospital three-fourths of the command. My own health being unaffected, enabled me to march in command of two of the four companies on this last fruitless expedition.

On all these marches, I carried my seven days' rations in a bag rolled in my blanket and strapped across my shoulders, together with an extra flannel shirt (the only wear on such tramps) and pair of socks, besides my double gun — swords being worse than useless. Adieu, my dearest E.

FORT BROOKE, March 18, 1842.

MY DEAR FATHER: — . . . The policy now adopted for the *conduct* of this war is negotiations, whereby we have really done more to bring it to a close than by all the battles fought. For in the battles, as generally fought with these Indians, the most that is accomplished is a few killed and the rest dispersed. And when once a tribe scatters, the pursuit by troops is worse than useless. Some of those lately brought in by the means to which I have referred, have told us that at such times even the closest ties of relationship are distrusted; the father will not confide to the son, nor one brother to another, even the direction in which he purposes to flee, lest one, being taken, be compelled by force or seduced by money to disclose the retreat of the other.

The scout in the Wahoo will be postponed in order to ascertain the effect of this scheme upon the leading men of the more distant families. An Indian of Halleck's party, which is supposed to be somewhere near the Wahoo Swamp, has been sent to him with offers; and we are waiting with interest the result of the mission, which, if unsuccessful, will be followed by the movement I have spoken of. Meantime we have little to do but to feed on the capital fish and oysters which the bay affords in countless numbers. The weather is delightful; for though the sun is powerful, the sea-breeze by day, and the land-breeze at night, which are as regular as the rising and setting of the sun, render the temperature, however formidable by thermometrical admeasurement, quite tolerable.

April 10

P. S.—The Indian sent to Halleck has returned faithful to his promise; but he brings only a grand account of the defiant manner in which Colonel Worth's message was received by the chief, who bears the character of a most independent and indomitable fellow. He told the messenger to go to his people, and intimated that if he made any attempt to return to the enemy, he would be shot. Our friend, however, acquiescing at the time, found an opportunity during the night to make his escape.

WASOO SWAMP, April 18, 1842.

(*P. S. second.*)—Since we marched from Fort Brooke there has been but faint prospect of bringing Halleck to reason by words, however kindly spoken. Worth seems determined, therefore, to see what virtue there may be in leaden bullets; and we are thus far on our way, Worth and his principal force being in advance.

Yesterday morning before breakfast, "Gopher John," who has grown up from a long-legged, ill-looking negro boy to be a fine-looking fellow of six feet, as straight as an Indian, with just a smile of red blood mantling to his forehead. He dresses remarkably well, and has altogether a jaunty air that would fix your attention at sight. He retains his *cognomen* with the Indians as well as with the whites who lived in the Indian country before the war. The Gopher is with us as interpreter. Well, as I have said, he brought me early yesterday morning a mess of fish—the yellow perch—in return for a hook and line which I had given him the day before. Seeing that my breakfast was being prepared, he said, "Let me cook them for you, Captain;" and without waiting for a reply, he drew the coals from the front of the fire and spread upon the space thus cleared some hot ashes, then laid the fish upon the ashes just as they came from the water; and having covered them also with ashes, he covered them up with a coating of live coals. In about five minutes he removed the covering of coals, lifted the fish with a knife and fork, removed the skin with the scales, &c., &c., all at once in the neatest manner you can imagine; and then placed the fish, looking as white as this paper and smoking-hot, upon a dish: half a dozen perch that really would have done honor to your cuisine at home.

In the evening, after supper, I was sitting at the fire in front of my tent, enjoying a good cigar, which was one of a box I had procured at Tampa from the Charlotte-Harbor Fishermen who brought a small cargo in one of their fishing-smacks direct from Havana, when the Gopher came strolling along, and saluting me with a "*Good even, Coptain,*" (he always pronounces the first syllable of the word as if written with an *o*,) he seated himself on the ground on the opposite side of the fire, and rolled the tobacco-smoke in a broad curl above his head. Observing that his dog, a great Indian cur, was seated in a very quiet and respectful attitude at his side, I opened the conversation with asking the *name* of his wolfish follower.

"He name 'Fuse,' sir," was the reply.

"Fuse, Fuse, Fuse!" said I, mustering up my remaining knowledge of the Seminole tongue without success, "what is that in English, John?"

"He English himself, sir."

"How is that, John?"

"Why, sir, you see, when dis dog was giv' to me, he was a little puppy 'bout so big," showing with his hands the length (about eight inches) of the juvenile wolfish cur. "At dat same time I wos courtin' for a wife, and all de gal *fuse* me, (refused me.) Dis so provoking to me, I git mad,—and I call de dog '*Fuse.*'"

I am messing with Colonel Garland; we have a good cook, and have had some capital chowder of catfish, caught by my friend Gopher John. This fish is different from the catfish of the northern waters; it is found in large ponds, together with a black trout, or a species nearly allied to the trout family, and is a fine, firm fish. We shall leave here to-morrow to be in at the concentration of Worth's forces at a fine spring some twenty miles north of the Wahoo, (as the Indians call the tree which is the *cork-winged Elm.*) There, as soon as Halleck's whereabouts is known, Worth will be at him with all his vigor.

Camp at the Warm Spring, 32 miles S. of Fort King,
April 23, 1842.

My dear Brother: — We marched from Tampa on the 11th inst., (Graham's company and mine.) At Fort Dade, on the Withlocoochee, we separated, he taking the left bank, I the right. And at daylight on the morning of the 15th we entered the Wahoo from different sides, and, in common with other companies on the south and east, marched towards a common centre, scouring the hummocks as we went. In this way two days were passed, and we were nearly eaten up by mosquitoes, without finding any Indians. On the 19th we came here and united with two companies of the 2d Regiment and one of the 8th. On the 20th we moved towards Pelahlikaha, *sign* having been seen in that quarter. The swamp of Pelahlikaha is a mass of grassy ponds and oak islands, intersected here and there by pine ridges, and about five miles long by two wide. Our force, consisting of about two hundred men, was divided into seven detachments of twenty-eight each, led by an officer and a guide. On the 22d we entered the swamp at different points, while a company of dragoons, with Colonel Worth, moved about from point to point in our rear.

My guide was fortunate in finding fresh sign, and I was pushing on, when I was joined on the borders of a pond by Colonel Garland and ten mounted men, he having passed round the hummock which I came through.

The Colonel sent to inform Colonel Worth in order that he might direct the other two detachments to move towards us, *our course* being indicated. Neither Major Graham nor Lieutenant Berry, who commanded two detachments of the 4th, however, could be found. But proceeding on our course, we fell in with a detachment of the 8th, and afterwards one of the 2d, whose guides had also discovered *sign*, leading as it appeared to a common point. The guides soon began to look a little uneasy, and declined to follow the trail any further in advance, saying that a large party of Indians must be near at hand.

The men were then brought into line: my detachment in the centre; the 2d and 8th on the right and left, extending so as to outflank the enemy. In this order (the whole being placed under my command) I was directed to charge the hummock. All looked as quiet and peaceful among the green boughs and dense undergrowth of the hummock as a summer solitude. But we had not advanced fifty yards within its shade, when the sharp crack of a rifle in front broke the stillness of the wilderness. I gave the word, "*forward!—double-quick!*" and in an instant we were breaking through the thicket at them, while the rat-tat-tat of their rifles was answered by a hearty shout from our men. It was *Halleck-Tustenuggee* and Octe-Archy with their warriors. The principal part of them were opposite our centre, (the twenty-eight men of my company,) and they exchanged two successive shots with us, they retiring as they fired, and we advancing. They, however, made good their retreat, carrying off one killed and two wounded of their party. Thus a good many shots were exchanged without much damage. But it was a running fight in pretty thick cover, and we charged them too hotly for deliberate aim on either part. Still, from their superiority in passing through the brush, they managed to elude completely for a time our pursuit of those who carried off the Indians who fell. Just as this was over, I was ordered with my twenty-eight men to the left, and got on to the pine ridge just in time to relieve Lieutenant Arnold of the Dragoons from an uncomfortable position. He and nine men had been separated from his company in advancing with Colonel Worth to this point, and they were attacked in the open woods by the party we had just driven from the other hummock. One dragoon was killed and two wounded. I was about two hundred yards from the spot when the first rifle cracked. We came up on a run, and as we approached, they retired to the hummock. I again charged with my detachment, but they would not stand another shot. I pursued about a mile, and losing all traces of them, returned to the battle-ground. The troops had now all left the ground, and, as I supposed, the Indians I had pursued had doubled and gone to the south; so I pushed off in that direction. My guide had made his escape at the first fire, but I soon struck another trail, and following it, was completely disunited from all the other troops, who were on a trail in a different direction. Being baffled in the pursuit, I became irrecoverably separated from Colonel's Worth's party — the whole force. As I had left my blanket and my three days' hard bread with one of Colonel G.'s mounted men, it was of some consequence to my personal comfort that I should overtake him; this I accomplished, two hours after he reached this point, on the third day. I was out, however, three nights following Worth, having made a tour to the Oklewaha, crossing it twice; Colonel Worth after Indians, I after him.

In the mean time, the troops under Colonel Worth had taken an old man prisoner, and sent him out after Halleck. Worth came in here for provisions, having had only sufficient for four days at starting. The Colonel tells me that he has the strongest hope of getting the whole party to come in; they are about ninety in all. In the fight in front of their village we captured everything they had; and the old prisoner says they are destitute of clothing, cooking-utensils, and other articles, as well as food. The women and children escaped just before we came upon them; and the men managed to lead the troops in a different direction until they had got out of danger.

We are to remain here until they come in, which is promised in a few days, after which we are to return to Tampa. If they do not keep their promise, we shall have to push them again.

I write seated on my tent-floor, mother Earth, with a piece of bark on my knee for a table.

Fort Brooke, Tampa, May 11, 1842.

My dear Father:—Having given you previously an account of our country-dance with Halleck's Band of Micasukies, I have now to inform you that we reached this post on the 9th instant, with forty-seven of them our prisoners.

I told you we had commenced negotiations at the date of my last letter. Well, Halleck and his people came in to us, and drank and smoked, and ate with us, with every show of good faith. Halleck is a man of thirty-five years, with a face as smooth and features as delicate as a female, and with a smile that has all the sweetness of a woman's. But he is, nevertheless, a great rogue, and as notorious for his duplicity as his daring. With all his apparent mildness and a gentleness of manner (for he has all the dignity and repose of refined breeding) he is as self-willed and unmanageable as an unbroken mule. And he it is who for years past has terrified the settlements with deeds of blood and fire.

Meantime our negotiation went on smoothly; he brought his people within five miles of us, and encamped on the edge of a deep cypress swamp, and pretending that the water was better there than anywhere else, paid no attention to a hint to be more neighborly; but requested that none of our men should be permitted to cross a certain line.

It was soon apparent to those who knew him well—the Indian and negro guides—that he intended playing the old game once more. What audacity! That is, finding his clan stripped of everything but their rifles, he purposed cajoling his enemies, until he could find means by buying, begging, and stealing, to re-establish himself, when he and his people would assuredly have taken French leave. But so wary and courteous was he, that the least show of distrust on our part would have ruined all; for, once more to the swamps, and good-bye to him for the season.

To have made a dash at his camp would have been like catching at the wind, his *videttes* watched us so closely. I accompanied him to his camp, one evening, with the Colonel's aide-de-camp, to take a peep into the matter. Our approach was known in the camp almost as soon as we started. We were received, however, very politely, and I noted his position well, and in the sequel profited by my knowledge.

The next day the chief expressed to Colonel Worth a desire to go to Fort King (thirty-two miles north), with permission to purchase from the sutler such necessaries as his people stood in immediate need of. This was a bold move, and it only remained now to see who could play the deepest game. Colonel Worth consented that the chief should accompany him, and on the 4th instant they set out together, Halleck taking one of his wives, her sister, and a child.

Colonel Garland was directed (being left in command) to take advantage of some moment, when a goodly number should be in our camp, to seize and secure them. Two days passed before the occasion presented itself, when, finding that they mustered twenty-four *present*, they were seized. Immediately after this I was ordered, in pursuance of Colonel Worth's plan, to make a dash at the camp with my company and twenty-five mounted men, capture what I could, and pursue the rest as long as there was a chance of success. I had with me Gopher John, and Isaac, as interpreters and guides, the latter as great a rascal as ever went unhung—a smart negro. Fortunately for me, their vigilance had relaxed since the departure of the chief. I pushed on briskly, and when three quarters of a mile from the camp, divided my force into three detachments, sending a party into the swamp, one through the pine woods to their rear, and advancing with the third on their front. As my detachment showed itself in front, they broke in three directions. But we cut them off everywhere and closed upon them, capturing twenty-one out of twenty-six. This, considering the character of the country, was a good haul; indeed, infinitely better than any one expected. The captives being informed of what had passed in camp, said it was now all over, and if the few stragglers who were absent were not pursued and run out of that country, they would come in and join their friends. This was a truth so palpable that I returned to camp with the prisoners and plunder I had taken, including seven good rifles. The next morning, as had been predicted, an old lady and a young man came in to their families, and the youth was sent after the remainder. Colonel G—— then set out for Tampa with Major Graham's company and mine in charge of the prisoners. We marched the seventy-eight miles in two and a half days, put the Indians on board a steamboat, and sent them to Cedar Keys, where they were met by Colonel Worth and the chief, who went round by Fort Waka-sasa, and there picked up the second chief and four warriors of Halleck's whom he had sent on a mission to the Creeks, among whom Octe-Archy was supposed to have gone, and who, having been furnished with horses at our camp, had left them at Fort Waka-sasa, while they went after the Creeks. They had returned from the swamps but fifteen minutes before the Colonel arrived, when they were immediately made prisoners, and confined in the guard-house together with Halleck and his women. What word they bring from the Creeks we have not learned.

The end *must* justify the means. They have made fools of us too often. And there is great hope now that Halleck will bring in Octe-Archy and Sam Jones.

SEA-HORSE KEY, May 23, 1842.

MY DEAR M——: At Fort Brooke, on the 15th, I received an order from Colonel Worth, who is established on one of the adjoining Keys (Cedar Key), to repair hither with my company for temporary and special service. The steamer that brought the order was in a few hours ready for sea again, so that I had but little time to pack up and embark my men. On my arrival on the 16th I reported at headquarters, when the Colonel informed me he had planned another expedition, and had set me down for the command of a column of two companies to move from this point to the Suwanee country to co-operate there with two or three columns moving from the northeast. The object was the capture of Octe-Archy's band, and that of Halpata, who were reported to be united there, and to count some thirty warriors. On the morning of the 18th I received orders to embark my own company and Gates' of the 8th Regiment for Fort Fanning, on the Suwanee, and then take the field. In a few moments the companies were under arms on the wharf, and the steamboat preparing to receive them, when an express boat arrived, bringing to Colonel Worth authority from Washington to close the war on the plan proposed by him in February last, and then rejected by the War Department.

The *projet* is to proclaim a cessation of hostilities, and then, through the medium of such chiefs as are here, to endeavor to bring in those who still remain secreted in the hummocks. This advice knocked my command in the head, and I consequently came to the right-about and ordered dinner.

Halleck was at once called into council, and there pledged himself to bring in the few of his people still absent, together with Octe-Archy, at once. He immediately sent out runners to both parties, and yesterday the men returned, bringing the assurance that they would listen to reason. In a week we expect to see them, bag and baggage. Some of Halleck's people have come in, among them a warrior who was badly wounded in the late fight. Halleck acknowledges in this affair two killed and five wounded. We have sent out this morning a horse for one of the wounded who is not yet able to walk. . . . .

I am at present in command of this post; there are three companies of our regiment and one of the 8th with me. Colonel Worth and staff are now at Depot Key, three miles distant. I have here the society of Halleck and all his good people, which is, or rather would be, vastly agreeable in a general way, if it was not sometimes a great bore. Halleck, however, is quite a gentleman, and frequently honors my board. I am required to keep a strict surveillance over his movements, but he is too much of the courtier to *see* that, and studies to make himself agreeable.

FORT WAKA-SASA, August 16, 1842.

MY DEAR BROTHER:— . . . . I have been moving about from post to post for a long time. In the first place I was ordered from Sea-horse Key to the main land, at a point at which Octe-Archy promised to meet Colonel Worth in council; the latter intending to seize the gentleman and his suite in the event of negotiations taking an adverse turn. But the wary chief took council of his fears, and ordering his people to disperse for one moon, he left the Colonel to digest his disappointment together with the feast prepared for the occasion. Thus were several weeks of expectation frittered away, and again for the hundredth time the old game must be commenced *de novo*.

I don't think I mentioned to you that this is one of a chain of posts leading from the Suwanee to the St. John's. I was ordered here with my company after the game with Octe-Archy was played out. I have with me a subaltern and a surgeon; the latter is a *bon vivant*—full of talent and full of life, and as I have not a *sick man* in my company, all our efforts are naturally directed towards "the enemy;" yet I must acknowledge that we now and then find it a little difficult to kill him quite.

I frequently hunt in the early morning before the sun attains much altitude, and usually bring in a deer or a turkey. The evening is pleasantly passed in chat with the son of Æsculapius. I was fortunate in finding a good garden here, thanks to the providence of some two or three companies of the regiment which I relieved. This furnishes abundance of vegetables; and we have deer for the killing. The deer in Florida (particularly in the southern portion) are not confined to any particular period of the year for coming in *season*. I have, for instance, found young fawns in December and January, and I have found bucks which had their new horns rubbed smooth in June. I recollect during the campaign in the Big Cypress, while marching through the water, seeing a little way to the right of our column—and I was not at the head of the column at the time—a fawn not more than a day or two old, lying asleep upon the mound of earth formed around the root of a cypress-tree. By cautiously approaching, I took up the pretty creature in my hands before he awoke. He bleated lustily for his dam, and when I replaced the little fellow upon his lonely island in his mossy bed, he displayed wonderful energy in his struggles to escape; but I held him down and soothed him with my hand until he became quiet and actually fell asleep again, when I left him to await the return of his dam, who was then on a visit, probably, to its twin brother or sister; for the doe generally produces two fawns at a birth, and leaves them at separate hiding-places until they are better able to escape from the enemy. And what a wonderfully wise and beneficent provision of providence is it that in the cleft in the foot of the deer, where is situated the organ which secretes the musky oil that enables the wolf by his sense of smell to follow his prey, this oil does not begin to flow until the fawn has lost its "spots," and then its fleetness enables it to escape its pursuer. The column halted about one hundred yards in front of where I had found the fawn, upon a small pine island, the abode no doubt of the mother. Here we made our morning meal and then resumed our weary march, splash, splash, through water half-leg deep, with nothing within view but the gloomy cypress until toward sunset, when a low pine island gladdened our hearts with a prospect of fire and rest. Adieu.

FORT WAKA-SASA, August 26, 1842.

MY DEAR FATHER:—*Jubilate, the war is closed!* At least it so is by *proclamation*. I learn that Octe-Archy, Tiger-tail, Bow-legs, &c., &c., have come in, and have agreed to the Government proposition to remove south and remain at *peace*. Many of their people, it is said, are already getting ready to go to the west of the Mississippi, and the rest, it is thought, may be induced to do so in the course of the winter. We are told that one of the regiments now here will be relieved; two being considered sufficient to keep the Indians in subjection until the close of the scene; that is, the removal of those in the extreme south, who have as yet shown no disposition to leave this paradise of Indians for the unknown country of the Far West. The two regiments to remain are the 8th, Colonel Worth's, and the 3d, Colonel Many's; the latter is superannuated and absent. We are told that our regiment, the 4th, will go to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri,—ten miles below St. Louis; indeed, we are daily looking for the order to proceed thither. Among the chiefs who are named as consenting to the removal, I have heard no mention of *Sam Jones*, whom I have known for many years as a proud, independent, self-willed man, who once having made up his mind, is not likely soon to be diverted from his purpose. When the

4th Regiment first came to Tampa, this Indian was poor and apparently supported his family by fishing; the fruits of his labor being disposed of at the Fort. There was at that time a very fine fish, twelve to fifteen inches in length, of a blackish or dark-gray on the upper parts, and whitish below, found at the falls of the Hillsborough in abundance. It was a remarkably fine fish, its flesh being very white and perfectly firm; and it was denominated by the regiment the "*Black Trout.*" This Indian, who was nameless as far as our information on that point had extended, daily brought his string of trout to the Fort at sunrise, and was as well known by all the garrison as the town-pump, received from the Regimental Sutler the cognomen of Sam Jones, as the embodiment of the myth celebrated at that time in New York in a low ballad, a burlesque of "*Dunois, the young and brave,*" namely,—

"It was Sam Jones, the fisherman,
Was bound to Sandy-Hook;
But first upon his Almanac
A solemn oath he took, &c., &c."

Now, our Sam Jones is, as I understand, living down near the Everglades, as yet undisturbed, and not likely to be induced by argument to relinquish a country where he can pursue his old "*penchant*" at pleasure, for the arid plains of the West, of which the proffered lands are known to consist. But however that may be, I shall not throw cold water upon the sanguine expectations of the "proper authorities" at the seat of the National Government. Yesterday, Colonel Worth passed through here on his way out of Florida. He and his staff dined with me (the commanding officer). I fed them on venison and champagne: the first of my own killing; the latter from the sutler who, on inquiry, I found had one unbroken basket, the only one on his invoice by a late wagon. This I ordered to be sent to my quarters, and we had a very agreeable dinner. The Colonel gave me a glowing account of his journey from the Warm Springs to Fort King with Halleck. He said, when they arrived at Fort King, and were seated in Colonel Crane's quarters, he communicated to the chief the fact that he was a prisoner. Halleck stormed like a madman at the treachery and the *insult* thus offered him. But between you and me, Halleck is a capital actor, as you will learn before I have finished this letter; and you will probably recollect that I paid him by order of Colonel Worth $1000 dollars in silver at Cedar Keys, which might have been understood as a solace for the pain it caused him at being thus separated from his people. However, be that as it may,—the Colonel continued:—

"On arriving at this post, I learned that the second chief, an honest, single-minded man, whom I had sent to look after Octe-Archy, who I was carelessly informed, as in a thoughtless moment, by Halleck, might be found in this region, had just returned from his mission, having left his horses here. I at once ordered them to be made prisoners and confined in the guard-house. I also told Halleck he must now submit to the same restraint, and I sent him with one of the guard to join his warriors. While dinner was being prepared, I sat there, on your piazza which looks upon your parade-ground and the front of your guard-house, close by on the right, with the commanding officer of the post, and saw Halleck when he met his men. The meeting was ceremonious, the chief holding himself on his dignity. They had not, however, been long in conversation before high words were used,—in fact, as I afterwards learned, the subchief had plainly, and in decided language, accused Halleck of selling his people. At this the latter's frame dilated, every muscle quivered, and he sprang like a tiger upon the offender, bore him to the ground like a kid, and seizing his right ear in his teeth, tore it completely off. Then springing up, he gave his war-whoop, crying aloud, "Halleck-tustenuggee! I'll make you understand that I am your chief, whether prisoner or not." The Colonel concluded with the declaration that it was the most striking incident of the kind he had ever witnessed.

After dinner, Worth prevailed upon me to ride with him to the next post, Waka-hoote, eighteen miles. So I put a bottle of champagne and my little silver cup into my saddle-bags, and we mounted. At a fine spring about half-way we halted and sprang the cork. Refreshed by this pause, we pushed on and arrived at our destination just at sunset. In the morning, after breakfast, I returned *solus*, arriving at dinner-time. Having made a good meal on some hot roast venison, which I washed down with a glass of champagne, I sat down to give you the good news that there is a prospect of our getting out of the swamps in the course of a month or so; and the foregoing is what I have scratched off. Adieu.

JEFFERSON BARRACKS, Oct. 18, 1842.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—On the 14th September, I marched from Waka-sasa to Fort Fanning on the Suwanee River, where I was to take steamboat transportation to Cedar Keys, and expected to embark immediately for New Orleans. But on reaching Fort Fanning, I received information from Colonel Vose (commanding in Florida) that some apprehension was entertained that Octe-Archy's band, some seventy warriors strong, who were collected in that vicinity under a pledge to move south to the country allotted to them, might prove treacherous and disperse. He therefore detained my company after the others had sailed, and ordered me to be ready to move at a moment's warning, should a movement become necessary.

In this way I was kept at the most unhealthy point in the territory for near three weeks, at the end of which time (although I arrived without a man sick) I had twenty-eight of my men down with fever. Fortunately I lost only one by it.

At length I embarked with nearly half my company sick, and without a surgeon, as none could be spared from the different stations. I procured a supply of medicines—all I asked for was a good supply of calomel and quinine—and set sail. We ran over to New Orleans in three days, but the seeds of disease implanted by the Suwanee malaria were daily developed, and new cases were constantly occurring. I made free use of calomel and quinine, and with great success. My practice was twenty or thirty grains of the former, followed the next day with thirty to fifty grains of the latter, between sunrise and sunset; this may appear extravagant to Northern physicians, but the attacks were sudden and violent, and smaller doses would have been trifling with the disease.

The yellow fever was abroad in the Crescent City, and I hurried past with as little delay as possible. As we ascended the Mississippi, new cases were of daily occurrence, and I lost another man who had become convalescent, but had relapsed, and being of shattered constitution, could not stand the shock. At last, on the tenth day after leaving Fort Fanning, the last cases occurred. These were myself and an old German. The latter died after our arrival here; the only man I lost of sixty-three cases of the most violent *Suwanee fever*. I am now quite well again, with my mouth and nose covered with fever blotches.

I have got comfortably fixed in good quarters. *Sport* and *Blue*, who have come safely out of Florida, are at my feet while I write this. Love to all. Adieu.

[From the autumn of 1842 till late in the following year, the writer remained on duty with his company at Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis, Mo. During that period, the time passed pleasantly enough, though without the occurrence of anything of particular interest, as he infers from the examination of letters written by him to his friends at home during that time.

In December, 1843, he was ordered with his company to Fort Scott, Osage Indian Nation, where the company formed a part of the garrison of that post, until ordered to join General Taylor's command at Corpus Christi, in the spring of 1845. Some idea of a fine hunting country will be formed from the following letters.]

[The letter from which the following is an extract, appeared at the time it was written, in Porter's "*Spirit of the Times.*"]

Fort Scott, Indian Territory, March 3, 1844.

My dear Brother:—In conformity with my promise I will now give you some account of my favorite dog Blue. He is of high-bred, imported stock, being out of Colonel Mason's celebrated setter Nell, by an imported pointer. Thus a direct cross of the pointer on the setter, both of imported stock, he has the short hair of the former with the figure, action, and temper of the latter. His head is large; you would perhaps think out of proportion; but it is well chiselled, and looks as hard as marble. At a certain time, not long since, a military gentleman well known to the country, being on a visit to the station where I then was, called on me. While he sat with me, Blue came into the room, and advanced, as it were, to greet the stranger in a friendly way; the latter as he kindly patted the dog, said to me, "That dog has a head like Daniel Webster!" His head, so much admired, is black and glossy as the raven's wing, with a narrow medial line of grayish-white. Entire body, excepting the head and a large black blotch on the rump, *blue*, or of such a fine mixture of black and white hairs as to produce that color. Figure to yourself a dog of more than common size and power, with a broad, deep chest that indicates his matchless bottom; limbs that give him speed little inferior to that of the greyhound, and you have Blue before you. As a partridge dog, or on grouse, woodcock, or turkeys, he was, with a wonderful nose, I may truly say, perfect. But it was as a *deer-dog* he was destined to shine without a rival. Here, in the wild lands around, we have cover for abundance of game of endless variety.

The Marmiton River, on which the Fort is situated, after a course of some ninety miles, uniting with the *Marais-de-Cygne*, forms the Osage River of Missouri. The Marmiton in its passage through the vast level or rolling prairies, humble enough in itself, receives the slender tribute of numberless little prairie streams and spring branches. All these, it must be confessed, are silent and unpretending currents; nevertheless, they, as well as the ravines that serve to drain the plains, are, to a greater or less degree, margined with heavy timber or dense brushwood that moisture and a continued growth of vegetation have saved from the wrathful fires that sweep the parched plains in autumn. Into these snug little coves, the deer, after feeding hurriedly on the open plains, retires to pass the hours devoted to ruminating. Here the coy partridge or quail rears its brood in security. Near by, the Pinnated Grouse forms its nest and raises its pack, away from its solitary mate. Of each in its season, we have the deer, turkey, grouse, partridge, woodcock, snipe, plover, of half a dozen or more species; and on the lakes near the river, swans, geese, of two or three species; and ducks without number; pelicans, sand-hill cranes, &c.

Altogether, including its fine climate, it is a glorious country for the sportsman. Deer I always hunt on horseback, and shoot them as they bounce from the tall grass or hazel-bushes that line the streams. The advantage of shooting on horseback is, that, being elevated, you see distinctly the deer, which you could not do at all on foot. To illustrate this, I give you some extracts from my hunting-diary of last fall and winter. . . . . .

SATURDAY, October 9, ——.

To-day I was abroad at an early hour; for, being exempt from duty, I proposed paying a visit to the hunting-grounds down the river. Accordingly I rose before *Reveille*, and speedily donning my buckskin hunting-suit, (made of some of Blue's trophies,) I breakfasted and was off before the sun was up. To-day I rode Champion, a sorrel colt of great speed and bottom, much to the chagrin of Master Jordan, my negro boy, who, being sometimes indulged with a turn on Champion while I rode Cherokee, saw in prospective for himself a brisk trot of some miles on the roughest of all trotters, Cherokee,—for easy gaits are not to be counted among his good qualities. . . . This has been one of those beautifully bright days we often enjoy here at this season.—What a glorious dawn! The heavy dew of the preceding night has been congealed; and the prairie is white with frost. The sun, at rising, casts his broad beams over the vast plain, and the whole surface is in an instant brilliant with sparkling crystals; the abrupt prairie knolls, whose soft parts the frosts and storms of past ages have loosened and swept away, seem in the distance to elevate their rocky summits, now crowned with glittering diadems. Let any one to whom nature has not altogether denied the faculty which enables man to appreciate her glorious works, ride out upon the boundless plains at this hour, and, from an elevation he may select, cast his eyes round upon the wide-spread landscape. On all sides, to the farthest extent of his powers of vision, the varied prospect is open to his view. Hereaway for miles he traces the winding courses of streams, whose banks are clothed with dense and heavy timber. Yonder he regards with admiration, growing as he gazes, the countless undulations of the land, each as it succeeds the other diminishing in the distance, until the last faint wave is blended with the blue horizon. Then he looks up into the ambient space above—into the bright, bright sky,—his mind is impressed by the magnificence of the scene, and inhales, as it were, a portion of the health and freshness that pervade all external nature at this her chosen hour. And *then!* if he have not more than ordinary obtuseness, the contemplation of these admirable works of creation will give a purer impulse to his spirit, and prompt to feelings of gratitude and praise towards the wise, the good, and all-powerful Designer.

Some such reflections as these were called up in my mind this morning, as I paused for a few moments on one of the prairie knolls to the north of the lakes, and which commands a noble view of the meanderings of the two Drywoods (branches of the Marmiton) and all the country far beyond. We had crossed Carlos' Branch, five miles below the garrison, without having seen any game whatever, except a straggling grouse or two, that would rise from the burned prairie ridge at the distance of a hundred yards or more, and with rapid wing direct his flight across the bottom. About half a mile beyond, however, while crossing through the tall unburned grass of a gully or drain, my eye caught the forms of two deer feeding along the gentle slope of the next ridge, at the distance of nearly half a mile. Stopping my horse, I very soon was satisfied they had not yet seen us, and accordingly dismounted to observe their movements, the grass concealing ourselves and horses entirely. They continued feeding—slowly approaching the crest of the slope—for nearly ten minutes, when a fitful gust of wind, common in prairie countries, came rolling on from the southwest, swept over us, and passed on directly towards them. A few short moments elapsed before the tainted breeze reached the deer; but the instant it did so, their taper necks were thrown up with a jerk, and their bodies balanced for a brief period as their eyes overran the dale, then whirling about, they made a few bounds, then stopped to look again. This time the scrutiny was more protracted, and resulted in the conviction of one of them, apparently, that the alarm was unfounded; for he quietly resumed his occupation of nibbling at the succulent roots of a species of coarse grass which they are fond of. Not so, however, the other: he tossed his head about with evident distrust and anger, and finally making a few oblique leaps, turned and galloped away, followed by his companion. At this moment two deer, that had been lying down at a little distance, (and although on burned ground, not visible, for the reason they were not in motion,) sprang up, taking the alarm from the retreat of the first, and likewise dashed away, though not in company with, nor in the same direction as the others. As we had kept perfectly still, I am quite sure they did not discover us with the organs of vision; and I mention this in evidence of the acute sense of smelling in the deer. I have said that I did not observe the deer because not in motion; I will now remark that, on a sunny day, the reflection of light from any object in *motion*, on the burned and blackened prairie, is visible at astonishing distances, although the eye would not detect it unless in motion; and the practised hunter or Indian will recognize a particular form in what to one unskilled would appear a shapeless mass.

On reaching the ground which the deer had left, I took the trail of those first observed, they having directed their course towards a spring-branch, with whose grounds I was well acquainted, about a mile beyond. Having told Blue to *hie on*, I followed at a hand-gallop, having no idea that they would stop within the intermediate space which was burned very clear. But I had not proceeded more than half way, when from a patch of tall grass not fifty feet in diameter, which by some chance had escaped the fire, and at the distance of thirty yards in front, the two deer burst forth; there never was a more beautiful offer for a double shot. A stiff pull upon the curb soon brought my colt upon his haunches; I dropped the reins, but the instant I raised my gun, the villain Champion made a lunge forward right at the deer; a sudden jerk of the rein brought him up all standing a second time; but again, before the gun was brought to my cheek, away he dashed after the deer, and this time, too, he gathered himself so vigorously, that before I could bring him to a stand, the deer were out of reach, and I lost the shot. If any execrations escaped my lips at the instant, they were, I believe, neither very elegant, nor at all edifying; pass we, therefore, by that; but I burst into a laugh, which restored my good-humor, at a sudden exclamation of Jordan's. He had come alongside, and with eyes wide open, and every muscle distended, was sitting bolt upright on the passive Cherokee, and now exclaimed,—

"Yes, sir, if you 'd a rode Cherokee to-day, you 'd a killed *those* deer!"

"Hang Cherokee," retorted I; "if I kill a deer to-day, I kill him on Champion,—besides, Champion is not so much to blame after all."

The fact was, I had but a few days before run him several miles over nearly the same ground, after a wounded deer, before I had secured it, and Champion thought he must run again.

Without further pause we continued our course, whither the deer had preceded us, in double-quick time. We reached the creek, and Blue led us down the broad bed of grass for a short distance, when the deer again made their appearance, two hundred yards ahead, and re-ascended the ridge by a retrograde movement. But the gait at which they went, *i. e.* making lofty bounds from side to side, alighting on three feet, and allowing the erect tail to flap loosely from right to left, indicated very certainly that they would not go far before they would again lie down. As soon as they disappeared behind the ridge, I ascended it; they were nowhere visible, and I was now satisfied that they were lying in the gully below, which I accordingly approached with all caution, Blue moving in front. As we arrived within eighty yards of this gully, the deer (they were both bucks) sprang out upon the slope of the farther ridge, running close together, and so perfectly side by side, that the near one completely covered the off one. It was too far for my gun to do certain execution, but I fired both barrels in quick succession, and beheld the buckshot cut up the dust for the space of twenty feet all around them; the deer next us, however, staggered, and I saw plainly that he was hit.

"Go it, Blue," I cried, and we gave them a brush for a couple of hundred yards; but seeing that the wounded deer was not mortally injured, I drew up, called in my dog, and stopped on the summit to reload my gun. While thus engaged, I saw one of them pass out alone from a grassy ravine about four hundred yards ahead. "Aha," I cried, "only one of them; then my buck is safe; he is lying in that ravine, Blue, and another shot will do the business." So saying we moved on, Blue again taking the trail with the steadiness and precision of a veteran fox-hound. On reaching the gully, I entered the strip of grass some sixty yards wide, following close on the heels of my dog, who passed entirely through it, and was moving off over the burned ground. "How is this, Blue? you have passed the wounded deer and taken the trail of the other." I gave a low whistle, and Blue was returning in obedience to the call, when Jordan cried out, "There he goes, sir!" In fact, the deer, on coming to the narrow channel of the drain, instead of crossing it with the other, had turned up the channel for a short distance, and then sloped into the grass again and there laid down. This channel being divested of herbage, and covered with loose dry stones retaining no scent, the dog had, without pausing, crossed it, and followed the direct trail. By this ruse the deer had expected to escape. When the boy called out, however, I whirled my horse around; the deer was already out upon the slope in our rear—at long shot—and running directly from me, thus presenting but a narrow mark for a scattering shot. I let go both barrels, however, as fast as I could pull trigger. The deer rushed forward a few strides, then suddenly slackened his pace. Before Blue got through the tall, thick grass, the deer was a hundred and fifty yards ahead, on open ground. But animated by my voice, the dog gave tongue for a few jumps, and then spread himself silently and in earnest. At first we gained rapidly on the deer, and I could see the blood drawn by the last shot flowing upon and staining the pure white of his nether teguments. But as the horse's hoofs began to clatter behind him, the buck redoubled his efforts; and for half a mile, Blue, although he gained on him steadily, gained on him only inch by inch. While cheering Blue on with my voice, I was infinitely amused by the conduct of my colt, who, while the race continued, as the ground became more favorable and enabled us to close upon the buck, would neigh at him most vehemently, as if he were saying in his own language, "Hallo! little horse! we'll be with you directly." Champion evidently wanted to make acquaintance with the chase, and straining every nerve, without further intimation from myself through the medium of the "houlders," as Paddy called the spurs, that our sentiments on that point were entirely congenial, he continued to gain at every bound, and was almost upon his haunches, leaving Blue, fleet as he was, behind, till an abrupt rocky descent to a gully, too wide for a single leap of horse and rider, compelled me to draw rein for a moment, while Champion, closely following the track of the buck, scrambled over as well as he might. The deer was steering his course for Carlos' Branch, about a mile distant from our starting-point, now in sight with its heavy cover of undergrowth, a half mile ahead. Blue was now with me again. "Go it, Blue! go it, my boy!" I cried, and Blue *did* strain to it with furious energy as the chase waxed warmer. The deer, too, was beginning to show signs of distress, so that Blue's bottom was beginning to tell. Thus at times, in running fifty yards, the space between them would be reduced to a few lengths; then the powerful buck would give one of those prodigious bounds, such as not many animals *can* make, and nearly recover his position; but his strength would be exhausted by the desperate effort, and again he would falter. Repeatedly Blue made these brushes at him, and still the gallant buck had enough of energy left for another dash; again he gathered with all his strength and eluded his pursuers. At last Blue closed upon him to within three feet, but now both were going at the *very top* of their speed, (under which circumstances it is impossible for a dog to "catch,") and the thicket of Carlos' Branch not one hundred yards distant. Both the deer and the dog seemed to feel that all depended on one short struggle, for the whole frames of both appeared to quiver with the violence of the effort. In half a moment more it was all over. The buck had passed the burned ground, and the tall weeds and grass closed behind him like a wall. Blue entered almost with him, it is true; but now the buck's weight gave him incalculable advantage in breaking down the obstructions in their way, and this was at once apparent; for in going twenty yards, he was not only out of reach, but out of sight of the dog. In another instant the deer was likewise lost to my sight in the vine-tangled thicket. "Adieu, *au revoir*, old fellow," I called out as I reined up in front of a *chevaux-de-frise* of scrub-oaks, interlaced with grapevines and green briers. I drew my hunting-knife, and slashing at the green briers, made out to reach the banks of the stream, where Blue took a glorious plunge into the "drink," and I alighted to reload my gun and let Champion breathe until Jordan should come up. "He has won this heat, Blue," said I; "but you'll have him the next heat, old boy, and he's not going far before he lies down, unless I am mistaken.

When my servant arrived, we went down-stream a little way, and then crossed. After crossing, we had only to find the *trail* again, in order to continue the pursuit. Blue very soon found it,—for the deer, immediately after crossing, had turned down towards the Marmiton. Blue led us outside of the scrub, along the edge of the prairie, for half a mile, and then entered the Marmiton timber, steering directly for the river. I had entertained no suspicion that the deer would go so far before he lay down; and I now began to apprehend that *he might not be so badly hurt after all*, and that on reaching the river we should find he had crossed. I, however, proceeded cautiously through the woodland, and having directed Jordan to fall back a little, I prepared to give him a broadside in case he should show his flag. We had not gone far, when I saw Blue trail right through a covey of partridges (that were running), and as they one after another whirred over his head, he paid no more attention to them than he would have done to so many butterflies.

In this way I advanced to within a few yards of the river-bank; here Blue turned short off to the left, and immediately the deer sprang out from a dead tree-top, at long shot again, and ran directly back from the river. As he passed between two clumps of bushes, I gave him one barrel; he fell nearly to the ground, but recovering again, he went on—concealed by the brush, and I did not fire the second barrel. The next moment I heard Jordan, who had remained a short distance in rear of me, screaming out at the top of his voice,—

"Blue'll have him! Blue'll have him!"

At this sound, rushing through the brush, with the loss of some little skin from one side of my face, which a beautiful festoon of a green brier appropriated, I saw Jordan reeling in his saddle, in all the ecstasy of a negro ha!-ha!-laugh, and a few paces in front of him was the deer, standing on three legs, and straining forward, with neck extended, while his left hind leg was straightened out behind him as stiff as a pump-handle, in the jaws of the victorious Blue. The dog could not throw the deer, nor could the deer draw the dog a peg. Their limbs were firmly braced in opposite directions;—neither moved, but there they stood, absolutely like a group in marble. Jordan recovered his equilibrium sufficiently to catch the reins of the horse as I dismounted. There was a brief scuffle—one home-thrust of the hunting-knife—a broad gush of blood, and the struggle ended.

Returning, I hunted the skirts of the woodland all the way to the ford; but I saw no more game, save several coveys of partridges which I did not tarry to shoot. On reaching my quarters, I found a turkey just ready to be dished; and by the time dinner was on table, I had made my ablutions, dressed, and was ready to sit down to it, with a hunter's appetite, which is next in degree, and only inferior to that of a soldier's after a hard day's march. Good-night.

Fort Scott, Osage Nation, Nov. 12, 1844.

My dear Brother:—I achieved an exploit one day last week which I think is worthy of record. I killed a three-year-old buck, assisted by Blue, *with my knife;* of course I mean without first shooting him. It was a cold, raw day; the wind was blowing hard from the northwest. I had ridden down the Marmiton about two miles when, in crossing a little brook, Blue turned and gave me his customary and peculiarly wise look, which clearly indicated to me that he had discovered the *slot* of a deer. There he stood gazing intently in my face, until, if all was ready, I gave him with my hand the signal to "*go on;*" or, if my gun happened to be loaded with fine shot for partridges or grouse, until I had drawn them and put in buck-shot or balls. On this occasion he slowly followed the track in an easterly direction, perpendicularly from the brook. After pursuing this course for about a mile, he turned to the left and in a little while turned again and moved on directly westward for the brook. In due time we drew near the little stream, and I observed Blue raise his head on high, and then I knew he had winded the deer. We were just entering a patch of tall *horse-weeds*, as they are called here, and I touched my horse with the spur to bring him forward into line with Blue on his right, in order that I might have a left-handed shot when the deer should bound up. The tall weeds being dead rattled loudly as my horse broke through them. The deer, suddenly roused from his noonday slumber, I do not doubt, fancied the sound came on the wind, which as I have said blew strong from the westward; and so impressed, he made a leap toward the east directly at Blue. The next instant he saw the dog, and as a deer will do sometimes, when suddenly surprised, "*squatted*," or fell flat upon the ground, hoping to escape observation. But Blue had caught a glimpse of him and fiercely sprang forward. The buck, for such he now proved to be, also bounded up, and in attempting to turn about at the same time, was tripped up by the strong dry stocks of the horse-weed, and fell. Before he could recover his footing, Blue had him by the left hock—the part he *always* seizes when he comes up with a wounded deer; the deer fell upon his left side, and the leg of which Blue had hold being under him, he could not rise. I jumped from my horse, put my foot upon the buck's neck, and drove my hunting-knife quite through it, severing at one thrust both jugulars. Seeing this, Blue let go his hold and shook himself preparatory to the expected flow of blood which he always lapped with great satisfaction. But the instant the leg was released, the buck drew it under him, and by a powerful lunge threw my foot off and rushed forward. I turned to catch up my gun, which lay behind me on the ground, but before I recovered it, Blue had him again by the same hock; nevertheless the strong deer carried him along running on three legs, while the blood was spouting out full a foot from each side of his neck. Blue held on, although his forefeet never touched the ground; and the deer's right hock was beating him over the head at every leap. As I ran by their side admiring the novel feat, I saw that Blue's eyes were closed as tight as my fist while they were getting such a pounding. In this way I kept at their side twenty or twenty-five yards, when fortunately a deep gully or drain crossed their path, or I do not know how the struggle would have terminated. This was three feet deep and some four or five wide,—the deer attempted to leap, but of course he went head foremost to the bottom, with the dog on top of him. I leaped down, and thrusting my hunting-knife into the deer's breast, severed the *aorta*, which at once settled the matter.

By this time Jordan on Cherokee was alongside, and with his assistance the buck was drawn up out of the gully, and I packed him into the Fort *without shooting him*. What think you of that? Adieu.

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS, January 15, 1845.

MY DEAR BROTHER:—My letters, hitherto, have in few words informed you that General Taylor's gallant little army is encamped upon a plain, extending from the mouth of the Nueces, along the beach to the town above-named, a mile or more; and reaching from the water's edge back some five hundred yards to the chaparral. Here the brigades are encamped in column of companies, the right flank being next the beach. And what is remarkable, though I have seen the same thing at Tampa Bay, is, that excellent water is to be found, by sinking a little well from eighteen inches to two feet within a short distance of the salt water of the bay, (Nueces.) Almost every officer has his own particular well. Mine is to the right of my company's wells, which are four in number; my tent is not more than twenty-five yards from the beach, and my well is about the same number of feet to the right of my tent. General Taylor's headquarters on a slight elevation, are not fifteen yards from my own tent, towards the right, or Nueces River; and his tent and those of his staff are not more than fifteen feet from the beach, yet his well is between his tent and the beach. And this water, which is used by the whole force, upwards of three thousand strong, is not only wholesome, but is sufficiently cool when drawn, to allay the thirst. The winter climate is mild, and were it not for the *Northers* which sweep down upon us now and then, would be delightful. These Northers, I must tell you, are awful visitations, although grand and majestic commotions of the lower atmosphere. Their effect upon the animal structure is such that I can account for it only in one way. It is this: these fierce winds arising along the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, pass with great violence over the vast barren waste lying north of Texas, and called *El Llano Estacado,—the staked plain.* This vast sea of sand was so called by the early Spanish traders of New Mexico, who kept up an overland traffic with their *neighbors* of the more fertile and more populous regions of southern Texas. But as caravans, not acquainted with the route, often missed their way in crossing this sea of floating and trackless sand, a party was sent out who planted strong stakes at such distances, that each could be seen from the one last established, and thus the name. The atmosphere, as I have already remarked, passing over this lifeless region, is in its passage deprived of its electricity, and in this state reaching Texas, strips of its electricity any low-conditioned animals, particularly if in feeble health, that may be so unfortunate as to be within the limits of its course, faster than it can be generated by the circulation of the blood. A sad instance, we are told by the people of Corpus Christi, occurred last year in this neighborhood. The wife of a man living a short distance from the town, went out as usual on a fine, calm, mild morning, to drive up her cow; she remained longer than usual, and in the meantime, at a moment's warning, a fierce Norther came with terrific violence across the plain. As soon as the husband discovered that his wife had not returned, he hurried out in search of her, and after searching far and near, at last found, not two hundred yards from his own door, the poor wife, who was not past the middle age, cold and lifeless. The morning being quite warm, she had gone out very lightly clad, and as they supposed, the cow had strayed off farther than usual. The Norther had overtaken her at a distance from her home, and before she reached it, the vital principle had been sapped; she fell to the ground to rise no more. This I believe is a well-known fact.

After the occurrence of a Norther, the wind invariably passes to the west; then the weather is fair, the air is elastic and buoyant, and the temperature moderate and equable for perhaps two or three weeks: by this time the wind has reached the south; the heat increases gradually, until it attains an almost insupportable ardor; suddenly, without the slightest warning, the wind chops round directly to the north; in a few minutes you hear its awful roar, and when the horizon is open and distant, as is the case here, you can absolutely *see* a dense column of atmosphere of a gray color, of a substantial or almost solid *appearance*, advancing upon you, while at the same time you begin to feel the effects of a change of atmosphere upon the system; a chill of indescribable faintness comes over the animal fabric, which sometimes, under the circumstances I have described, terminates in death. No Texan of this region ever leaves home for a single day, at this season, however soft and clear the weather may be, without taking with him the heaviest and warmest clothing he possesses. If the Norther is accompanied by rain in the form of sleet, it is of course the more severe. Not a fortnight since, we had one of these *Wet Northers*, as they are called; our camp was all ice,—ice was the all-pervading element,—the troops were prisoners in their ice-bound tents; for myself, I can say I found it impossible, without cutting open my own wall-tent, to make my exit, until my servant came with a kettle of boiling water, and gently pouring it over the *door*, or opening, separated the folds, and enabled me to make my exit.

A short time before this, taking advantage of the interval of pleasant weather, a party was formed for a grand hunt up the Nueces River. It consisted of Colonel Garland, Captain Martin Scott, Lieutenant Marcy, and myself. Garland and myself had a five-mule team and wagon for our tents, baggage, and provisions, and Scott and Marcy another, with which the Quartermaster had furnished us. We also had four soldiers to each wagon, as a guard against Indians, who sometimes ranged that country. The four with our wagon were of my own company, selected by myself as sturdy fellows; those of the other wagon were of Scott's company, and with the teamsters (also soldiers and armed) and ourselves, made a party of fourteen well-armed hunters. We marched about seventy miles up the Nueces River, and there hunted three days. The result was some twenty deer, about seventy turkeys, and ducks, geese, and partridges not numbered. Most of the game succumbed to Marcy and myself, but two or three of the deer having been shot by the other officers. Of the turkeys, all but two were fine gobblers, and in the most brilliant plumage, as well as in condition for the table.

We had quite a pleasant time, the weather being as fine as one could have desired. On one occasion,—the third day going out,—the road, an old grass-grown way of former days, passing not far from the oak and other southern timber which margins the rivers in this otherwise naked prairie country, Colonel Garland and Marcy diverged to the right, or in other words, made their way into the lowlands or timber-bottom referred to, while Scott and myself turned off in the opposite direction, and ascended a rocky cliff, which tried the strength and activity of our horses. We were all at this time about a mile in advance of our wagons. We soon reached the *second bottom*, as the intermediate shelf or plateau between the *river-bottom* and the high prairie land is called. We here found ourselves in a broken, disjointed, shelfy flat, from a quarter to half a mile wide, where apparently in former times a terrible shaking up of rocky fragments had taken place. Sharp points of rock were protruding from the earth in every direction from one to five feet high; some were sharp and flat, showing their stratified formation. The rest of the surface seemed to have been monopolized by the Cactus Opuntia, whose thorny spines compelled us to pick our way.

We had not long been wending our way through these various obstacles, when a clattering noise reached our ears, very suggestive of Indians approaching. Both of us reined up to await the denouement. In another moment, horses' heads appeared above the top of the cliff, and in one more instant, some fifty or sixty fine horses bounded upon the flat at a few hundred yards in front of us, but no Indian horsemen were to be seen. In fact, it was a drove of *mustangs*, or wild horses, startled from the river-bottom by Garland and Marcy. I exclaimed,—"Scott, I must have a brush with those fellows!" to which however he did not respond, not being as well mounted as myself. Fortunately I was riding the best of my horses, the gallant Champion; who, as I have told you, is a blooded animal, and is a first-rate mile-horse. Greatly excited at the sight of these beautiful animals bounding over the rocks, I clapped spurs to Champion and went at them; it was fearful riding, one constant succession of leaps either high or long; but I had enduring confidence in Champion's strength and sure foot, and I saw nothing but the wild horses. Champion brought me safely out of the flat, and *spread himself*, or bounded forward on the broad level plain. The grass had been burned, and the sod was as firm and elastic as a race-course. Putting my horse at his top speed, I was not long in drawing near to the troop. The first one I came up to was a dun mare with her foal; as I passed her, I cried out, "Good-morning, Molly!" and soon after was riding in the midst of the troop. They were going at full speed, and made the earth shake. They were sufficiently spread laterally to give me plenty of room; I noticed several horses whose withers, as I rode by their side, appeared nearly or quite as high as Champion's, (he is fifteen hands and a quarter.) At length I observed a black horse whose coat shone like the raven's wing; his mane and tail were full and flowing, and the former floated on the air like a regal filament. I never had seen so splendid a picture of a war-horse. I dashed at him, and was soon at his side, when I laid the barrel of my gun upon his neck, and rode side and side with him for perhaps one hundred yards, when, finding that my horse was passing him, I said, "Fall back, Blacky," and tapped him on the forehead with my gun; but being a little in advance, my gun struck him rather on the farther side of the head. This brought his forehead violently against my elbow, and his shoulder against my horse's flank, which nearly turned him round. As my horse recovered himself, it brought the black's head directly under my right arm, and we went on in that position, Blacky apparently perfectly quiet and undisturbed by the contact, until I gave him another tap on the forehead with the butt of my gun, when he passed to the rear, and I saw no more of him. I spurred on to the head of the troop, for I was absolutely mad or insane with excitement, and my horse Champion seemed to partake of the feeling. Here I rode at the head of the troop among the best of the horses, admiring their great beauty: they were of different colors, the bay and sorrel predominating; but there were also black and white, dappled and gray, and pied or painted. At length I began to think I had gotten far enough from my party, and I drew in gradually and let them pass, which they did without jostling or in any way interfering with me. This was my first interview with the wild horses of the plains, and never shall I forget the wild delight of that ride. Adieu.

P. S.—You may possibly ask why I did not attempt to capture one of them. I answer, that I could with ease have put the loop of a *lasso* with my hand over the head of the Black or almost any of them; but unless the rider's horse is trained to watch the movements of the wild horse, and throw himself on his haunches directly in the direction the other takes, he will be roughly jerked to one side, his forefeet will consequently cross, and he will be thrown instead of throwing the other. It would have been an impracticability with an untrained horse, and a most dangerous experiment. I have seen the thing done by the Mexicans, when catching a half-wild mule from out of a drove brought for sale to the Quartermaster. Good-night.

Corpus Christi, Texas, February 22, 1846.

My dear Brother:—We are still here, lying idle. I have little to tell you unless I touch upon the old ground, namely, Northers and deer-shooting, of which you have probably had *quantum suff.;* but in truth we have nothing to engage our attention more important than to prepare for the Norther, and after it has passed, to ride out beyond the chaparral, two or three miles, to the plains, the resort of deer in immense herds, geese, cranes, and the long-eared hare, one of the fleetest quadrupeds on our continent. The number of deer to be seen covering the plains is incredible. Officers will come in and say we saw a thousand deer to-day; others will tell you they saw at least two, three, or five thousand. Indeed, I have seen the plain covered as far as the eye could reach from my horse's back. But they remain at a distance from the chaparral, and it is impossible to approach within rifle-shot; the Mexicans sometimes use a "*stalking horse*," the dried skin of the head, neck, and part of the body of a mustang, which they with great caution push before them as they advance, crawling on the breast; then one rifle-shot puts in commotion the entire creation, you might imagine, of the deer family. There are, however, always a few about the edge of the forest or chaparral, and they generally bounce within fair gunshot; I have killed them here running at sixty to ninety yards with a musket-ball fired, from my double-barrel fowling-piece, from the saddle. In this respect Champion is without an equal. If I am riding at speed and simply drop the reins, he halts instantly and stands like a rock while I fire.

St. Joseph's Island, our principal depot of supplies, or the *base of operations* of this army, is one of several islands on the Gulf coast in front of the entrance to Corpus Christi Bay, the exterior expanse of Nueces Bay, on whose shore we are encamped.

By the way, we had a grand mirage last week, when this St. Joseph's Island, which is distant sixty miles, was elevated to our view above the intervening forest, and was distinctly visible for several hours. Here all supplies from New Orleans or from New York are landed and thence brought up in lighters. A fortnight or three weeks ago, the Chief Quartermaster reported to the General that the Quartermaster at New Orleans had sent the number of wagons called for, but that five of them would be without teams, as the number of mules sent was twenty-five less than the number required. This brought from the General one of his choleric expressions against the Quartermaster's Department, of which he is no great admirer; but with his usual quickness of decision, he directed the officer to send him all the Mexicans in camp; (there are usually a dozen or so here as traders, or Government spies.) The General, when they were assembled in front of his tent, told them he wanted fifty wild horses, for which they would be paid a fair price. In half an hour, four of these men were mounted and off for the salt plains, one hundred miles distant, where the mustangs collect in vast numbers. Here they built from the nearest meskee woods—the limbs lashed together with the lasso and hauled along the ground by their riding-horses—a corral with a funnel entrance, into which they forced some seventy wild horses, and in ten days from the time they started, drove into the Quartermaster's corral here, upwards of fifty of them. Twenty-five of the best were soon selected, lassoed, (which was an amusing sight,) thrown, haltered, and delivered into the hands of the teamsters who had been selected to break them into harness.

The docility of these horses is astonishing. The teamsters, old horsemen, after a couple of days, induced them to eat a little grass, cut for them; then they buckled a collar upon their necks, and so on with the rest of the harness, when they suffered themselves in a few days to be led about the corral. Finally, five (all bays) were attached to each wagon, and with a man at the head of each horse, started, in train, to make a circuit in front of the camp. This was accomplished without the slightest accident. The teamsters have already taught them to eat hay and corn; they also begin to put a log or two, or some other light weight, into the wagon, and as they are exercised for two or three hours twice a day, it is not doubted that they will be ready for the march by the early part of next month, when the General purposes advancing to the Rio Bravo del Norte, or Rio Grande. The rest of the horses were speedily disposed of by the Mexicans to officers and others in camp. I bought a beautiful young mare, an iron-gray, for five dollars. In a few days she suffered herself to be mounted and ridden slowly about without opposition. Adieu.

Camp opposite MATAMORAS, March 28, 1846.

MY DEAR BROTHER:— Information has just been sent round to us by the General, that he will dispatch a mail for Point Isabel, early in the morning, and I avail myself of the opportunity to inform you that I am well, and to give you some idea of the character of our march hither, our present position, &c.

First, though, as to our position. We are encamped on the left bank of the Rio Grande, which is here about one hundred and fifty yards wide, with the town on the opposite bank in our front, and its battery looking us full in the face. We arrived here yesterday morning between 10 and 11 o'clock, and at once took the position we now occupy. As the several brigades came into line of battle, we observed the house-tops covered with Mexicans, male and female, and their military began to march about with music and banners,—making altogether (for many of the houses are large and fine-looking) quite an imposing display. In a few minutes we had erected a flag-staff, and the *Stars and Stripes* were given to the breeze, while our bands played *Hail Columbia*. Soon after this a group of Mexican officers collected on the opposite side at the water's edge, and were requested by General Taylor to send a boat over. After some little delay, a boat came with a staff-officer; he was informed that General Worth, the second in command, wished to be conducted to the commanding General of the Mexican troops, (General Mehia,) as the bearer of a letter from General Taylor, and to hold some conference with him. The Mexican officer said he would make the request of the American General known to his commander, and departed. On his return he replied to the message sent, that General Mehia would meet General Taylor, but that he could not receive in person his second in command, though he was willing to send his second officer to meet General Worth. The latter proposition was agreed to, and General Worth was received *under a tree* near the water, by General La Vega. A long conference resulted in the most positive declaration of the Mexicans to allow no intercourse, and to all our conciliatory overtures, talked only of "war to the knife." Well, General Taylor's orders were positive not to commence hostilities; so here we stand looking at each other.

The Mexican force in the town is, as nearly as we can ascertain, fourteen hundred infantry and four hundred cavalry. Ours is two thousand infantry and artillery, and three hundred cavalry. General Ampudia is at Monterey with three thousand five hundred men, or, is perhaps marching this way; but the probability is we shall not come to blows, unless our Government decide on declaring war, and direct us to strike the first blow.

As soon as the engineers have laid out the *lines*, a field-work will be thrown up at each flank of our line, and a siege train of heavy guns, which we expect in a few days from Point Isabel, will be mounted to command the town.

So you have all the information I can give you in military matters; for my individual self, I enjoyed the march very much, as I always do. I brought my horses with me, one of which I packed with such things as I required for comfort, and the other I rode occasionally on the march. We saw abundance of game on the march (160 miles); I chased the wild horse and antelope, and killed the wild bull and the wild boar. The Mexican wild boar, the Peccary, is a singular animal; it has no tail, and it *has* a musk-pouch on the after-part of the back, which exudes a strong smell of musk. I obtained permission one day to ride off from the column, and fell in with a party of eight of these gentlemen. We had quite a conflict; a large boar charged at me twice with the noise and speed of a small locomotive, but I so managed my horse as to avoid him; and using musket-balls in my double gun, I continued to fire and load, sometimes pursuing and again keeping aloof, till in the course of half a mile I shot down three of them. The wild cattle are the descendants of the cattle imported from Spain when the country was first taken possession of by the Spaniards, and have been running wild in the regions we passed through as long as have the horses. They afforded fine sport, the bulls being much more courageous than the buffalo. One dragoon had his horse killed; two horses were struck, one of them badly cut, and several gentlemen had hair-breadth escapes to tell of. While passing through the district in which they range, I rode with Colonel Garland one morning in advance of the column, and we fell in with a large bull who charged us. The Colonel got the first shot, but made a clear miss; and as the bull turned towards him, his horse bolted and ran away with him. As my horse stood perfectly still, I fired from my right barrel a musket-ball, as he arrived within twenty paces of me. He was coming at me full tilt, and my ball struck him in the forehead, where I had aimed, but a little too low, being planted just over the right eye, whereupon the bull reeled and fell upon his knees. He rose again, but retreated, and I was compelled to follow him at half speed, and to put three more balls into him before he gave up. I took his tongue and the meat from one side; but left some six or seven hundred pounds of beef for the wolves and vultures. His tail, which I took as a trophy and placed on my horse's head, I gave to Captain Bragg, whom I happened to meet as I entered the camp, and with it a good steak. But you are weary of such adventures; I will therefore bid you farewell.

Camp opposite MATAMORAS, April 14, 1846.

MY DEAR M——: Since my letter announcing our arrival at this point, we have all been hard at work, strengthening our position. They have also been equally vigilant and laborious on the opposite side; for instance, they have thrown up four batteries upon the river-bank, besides the small fort which previously commanded the upper crossing, and which they have now strengthened. We have *en barbette* immediately in front of the town and near the bank of the Rio Bravo, a battery of four eighteen-pounders. And in rear of this, a field-work of a permanent character, sufficiently large for 800 or 1000 men, is progressing rapidly. This, when finished, will enable a regiment or a regiment and a half to repel any force the Mexicans would be likely at this time to bring against it.

They still hold out the idea of *war to the knife*; and two days since sent a trumpet to the ferry and called a parley. Two of the staff of General Ampudia (who I should have mentioned had reached Matamoras the day before) requested an interview with General Taylor. On their being received, they formally announced the arrival of General A. with a large force; and stated that he required General Taylor to retire from the State of Tamaulipas (the disputed territory), and that if he did not leave his present position in twenty-four hours, he (General A.) would open his batteries upon the American troops. General Taylor replied that he would give his answer at ten o'clock the following morning, and the gentlemen returned.

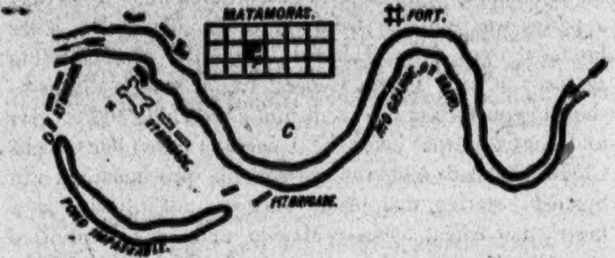
In the mean time some new disposition was made of our forces, in order to place them a little more without the range of the Mexican guns, and our own works pushed on with renewed vigor. At the hour appointed, General T. sent a letter to Ampudia, saying that he could not think of abandoning a position he had been ordered to take by the Government; that consequently, if General A. had determined to open his batteries, he might begin as soon as he pleased, but for the consequences, whatever they might be, General A. must become responsible. To this letter no response has been made either through Mexican herald or by guns, and both parties continued to work on their respective defences. The Mexican force, as nearly as we can learn, since the arrival of Ampudia, is between 5000 and 6000 men; but there are reports flying that some disaffection exists among them. The works were continued on their part till about dinner-time, when they were apparently completed, and since that time all has been extremely quiet in the town. It is thought they may design crossing in the night, above and below us, and we are ordered to be in readiness to meet a night attack. The general impression, however, among our officers is, that they do not mean to proceed to extremities. I shall add a *P. S.* in the morning, and let you know the occurrences of the night. I am quite sleepy, having been under arms all last night, for our supply-train being on the route with only a moderate escort, the 4th Regiment with Ringgold's Artillery Company were ordered to march to meet it yesterday at 3 o'clock P. M., and bring it in. We met it at the distance of ten miles, but the cattle were unable to proceed during the night, and we were compelled to lie on our arms on the prairie, without wood for fires, except such flimsy brush as we could collect in the dark, and without tents or blankets. It had been blowing a Norther for twenty-four hours, with a drizzling rain, and was quite cold and as dark as pitch. We had a very uncomfortable night, and starting this morning at 3 o'clock, did not get in till 10½ A. M. So I must lie down and take a nap.

April 15, 6 o'clock A. M.

P. S.—Our slumbers were not interrupted, and I have had a refreshing night's sleep. As they are still and quiet on the other side, I think it is possible they have withdrawn their troops to the rear of the town, where they are out of range of our guns, fearing an opening of our batteries. The town appears to be also nearly deserted by its inhabitants, and the only human beings we see are their picket-guards at different points along the river. I am of opinion we shall have a tedious time of it here.

Camp opposite MATAMORAS, April 23, 1846.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I am sorry to learn your uneasiness on my account. My health was improved by the exercise of the march from Corpus Christi to the Rio Grande; and our general duties here do not subject us to greater exposure than was daily incurred at the former place. The weather in fact, with the exception of one or two heavy rains, has been cool and pleasant for the season, and has thus enabled us to prosecute our works to advantage. Two bastion fronts of the Fort are already so far completed as to be in condition to receive their batteries, one of four eighteen-pounders, and the other of four six-pounders, and to afford cover for one brigade. The other two brigades (a brigade consists of two regiments) are encamped on the right and left flank of the field-work, and out of reach of the Mexican batteries. I was sorry to see, in a New Orleans paper received by the last mail, a report or rumor, that General Taylor had on the erection of the Mexican redoubts, retired *four miles from the town*. This is altogether without foundation, and therefore a scandalous fabrication. When Ampudia threatened to commence hostilities if General Taylor did not leave the Rio Bravo in twenty-four hours to the east of the Nueces, General Taylor merely put his forces into the best position to meet an attack, by moving two of the brigades a few hundred yards to the right and left. Our present disposition is a very good one; and our position is a strong one, as you may perceive by a rude sketch.



On the right bank of the river is the town extending nearly across the bend, between the town and the point is a cotton-field (C); above the town you observe a small fort (X), which was built before our arrival. Below the town are the three batteries they have thrown up recently. On the opposite bank is our Fort, and in front of it a battery of four brass six-pounders. Between the river and the upper end of the pond is the 1st Brigade, (marked 1st B.) Between the river and the lower end of the pond is the 2d Brigade, (2d B.,) and on their left the Dragoons, (D.) The 3d Brigade is encamped just above the Fort whence it can move to support either brigade that may be pressed. The small cross (x) near our Fort, is the General's Headquarters. The pond referred to is evidently the old bed of the river, which, like the Mississippi, has changed its course at this point. It is a capital barrier, as it is impassable for man or beast. In the town the square marked P is the *Plaza*, round which are the public buildings and the finest dwelling-houses. At the time General Ampudia threatened an attack, and said that open hostilities must ensue if General Taylor did not retire, the latter ordered the two United States vessels under his direction at Brasos St. Jago, to blockade the mouth of the Rio Grande. And a day or two after, two vessels laden with flour, and possibly munitions of war, for Matamoras, were stopped and ordered off. Yesterday a parley was sounded from the other side, and a letter brought over from General Ampudia, remonstrating against this act. To-day General Taylor, who has hitherto shown great forbearance, sent him a scorching reply. He told Ampudia, that before he (General Taylor) left Corpus Christi, he had sent the former his proclamation, (in Spanish,) stating that his advance was not intended as a hostile movement against-Mexico, and he had positive assurance that it had been received. Yet he had been met at Los Pintos, and told that if he advanced further, it would be considered a hostile movement. He had again been met at the river Colorado, and warned if he crossed that stream he would be fired upon. Again before he reached Point Isabel, he had been met by the prefect of Matamoras, and the same threat had been repeated, and the houses at the Point had been set on fire (which he, General Taylor, considered as an act of war). Nevertheless, on his arrival at the Rio Grande, he had sent General Worth, to repeat in person, that, &c., &c., &c.; and finally, that General Ampudia's last letter had left him no choice but to prepare for the worst; that the blockade of this river was the least offensive and injurious measure he could adopt to convince General Ampudia of his determination not to leave his position; that General Ampudia could have peace or war at his option; but that, if he desired any further intercourse by letter, his wishes must be couched in less arrogant and more respectful terms.

There is a vile set of marauders and banditti on this side of the river, who will rob and murder any one who may be so unlucky as to fall into their clutches single-handed; and these wretches must be hunted out of our country or caught and executed, before any citizen can settle here in safety. We have already commenced the thing, and as they muster in bodies of one or two hundred sometimes, it may give employment to some of the troops during the interval of negotiations between the governments of the United States, Great Britain, and Mexico.

But do not believe any rumors you may hear or see in newspapers,—these things are wrong nine times in ten. I will always tell you the state of things, so you may rest easy with respect to such stories until you hear from me.

I am on duty to-night (Officer of the Day), and as it is past two o'clock, it is nearly time for me to visit the guards and pickets; I will therefore bid you good night. Ever affectionately.

Point Isabel, May 6, 1846.

My dear Brother:—I received a few hours since your letter of the 20th ult., and have now to offer you my best thanks for it.

We have had some passages of arms with the enemy since I last wrote you. In the first place, while we were opposite Matamoras at work upon the Fort, the enemy were reported to be crossing the river some twenty miles above. A squadron of dragoons (sixty men) were sent out by General Taylor to obtain information; they fell into an ambush, and were suddenly surrounded by a force of two thousand Mexicans; they attempted by a very spirited charge to cut their way through, but the odds were too great; one officer (Lieutenant Mason) and ten men fell, and the remainder were made prisoners. A few days after this, General Taylor finding the Fort sufficiently advanced to be defensible with a garrison of one regiment of infantry, and two companies of artillery, determined to march with the remainder of his force to this point (which is the base of his operations), for the triple purpose of procuring supplies, completing the defences here, and meeting the enemy, who it was thought would attack us on the route. We marched on the 1st inst., and reached here the following morning, but without encountering the Mexican Army.

On the morning of the 3d, the enemy opened his batteries at Matamoras, on our works, occupied, as I have remarked, by the 7th Infantry, under command of Major Brown, and two companies of artillery. Our guns, however, under the direction of Captain Mansfield of the Engineers, silenced all their batteries, with the loss on our side of only one man. Before day on the following morning, Major Brown sent an express with the information to General Taylor. The man, when at the distance of ten miles, heard discharges of musketry, and supposed the place had been assaulted on this side; but we have heard nothing further, neither do we feel any uneasiness for our friends. We shall continue to work on the defences here till some time in the afternoon to-morrow, when we shall take up the line of march for Matamoras. The enemy is said to be encamped in force on our route; if so, we shall probably have a battle on the following day. Should it be so, you will have the public accounts of it as soon as you receive this, for I do not expect my letter will leave here in less than two or three days. In numbers, they are far above us; but we have confidence in our troops, and the men are eager for a contest with them. Good-night.

MATAMORAS, May 18, 1846.

MY DEAR M——: You observe that this letter is dated from the Mexican side of the river. We crossed yesterday, and took possession without opposition, the enemy having decamped in the course of the night preceding. The force that retreated under General Arista is stated to have been about four thousand. Our force which crossed is about one thousand eight hundred. We shall have, however, in about a week, an addition of some three thousand men, of whom five hundred are Regulars; the remainder, Volunteers from Louisiana. On their arrival, we shall probably advance towards Monterey, one hundred and eighty or more miles interior. The loss of the Mexicans in the battles of the 8th and 9th was very great; at the lowest estimate, much over one thousand in killed and wounded, and upwards of three hundred are admitted to have been drowned in crossing the Rio Grande in their retreat. On the first day their force was near seven thousand, and on the second day (the 9th) they were joined previous to the battle by the two Tampico Regiments, which, notwithstanding their loss on the 8th, brought their numbers up to about seven thousand eight hundred. These two regiments were called *Veterans;* had been in twenty battles, and it is said were never beaten. They stood their ground well, and were almost annihilated; one regiment retiring from the field with but twenty-five men. Our loss in these two days was one hundred and sixty killed and wounded. In our advance-guard, two hundred and twenty strong, there were seven killed, and one officer and fifteen men wounded. You have no doubt learned through the papers that General La Vega was taken prisoner with many officers.

P. McCALL, ESQ., *Philadelphia.*

CAMP AT MATAMORAS, Mexico, June 14, 1846.

MY DEAR PETER: — On the return of General Taylor from Point Isabel, (his base of operations,) which he had now strongly fortified, he marched rapidly to the relief of Fort Brown, opposite Matamoras, already besieged by the enemy, and met *Arista*, probably the best of their Generals, at Palo Alto, in an open plain in front of the forest which extends ten or twelve miles east of the city.

Between one and two o'clock P. M., on the 8th, a body of cavalry, seen in front, retired quietly as we advanced; a pretty good indication of the presence of their army at this point. A general battle was now certain, and on reaching the *spring* at Palo Alto, our immense train of wagons was *parked*, and the order of battle was established. Parties of Dragoons sent in advance, returned and reported the enemy in great force; they were not, however, as yet visible to us of the line, and every man seemed to stand an inch higher, as he strained forward to get a sight of them. The five regiments of infantry advanced in line of battle, ployed into double column at half distance. with deploying intervals, and were thus prepared to form square in the event of a sudden charge of cavalry, considered the strongest arm of the Mexicans. Our artillery, in all ten pieces, was disposed of thus: — two eighteen-pounders in the centre, the Horse Artillery (Ringgold's Company, three 6-pounders and one howitzer) between the 3d and 4th Regiments, (that is, in the right wing,) and Captain Duncan's Company (two six-pounders and two howitzers) in the left wing, or between the regiments of the 1st Brigade. We had but two squadrons of Dragoons; one was in rear of the right centre, the other the left centre. Thus formed, we moved forward a few hundred yards, and began to see the glisten of their bayonets, still at least one and a quarter miles distant; and as we marched on in perfect parade order, their line continued to develop to the right, till at last when their entire force became visible, it appeared that both their right and left extremes were nearly the length of our whole line beyond either flank of our little army.

The Mexicans were drawn up in two lines, as we have since learned, with a strong reserve. The first line consisted of twelve hundred cavalry, of whom eight hundred were lancers. The second line was of infantry, with eleven pieces of artillery distributed in the intervals between battalions: their entire force, as since ascertained, was something over six thousand, while ours was under two thousand three hundred. The Mexican right rested on a ridge, their left on a marsh. Our right rested on a sparse chaparral; but the plain in front was entirely free from bushes, and we had a fair view of them. They seemed to have everything in readiness to receive us, for not even a staff-officer was in motion along their line. On the other hand, we continued without beat of drum, to advance with the measured step of a drill-day, so that altogether the two armies presented, as you might say, a goodly sight to look upon. We had, however, barely got within range of their artillery, when they opened upon us. The fire was returned by our eighteen-pounders; our infantry was ordered to deploy, with the exception of the regiment on the left; and the horse and light artillery were thrown forward to try what impression they could make, or to induce the enemy to manœuvre a little.

The first scene was quite creditable to the discipline and skill of the Mexican soldier; for we constantly saw their ranks cut open by our shot and the spaces regularly closed; while we began to find out, from indisputable evidence, that their artillery was pretty well served. As soon as the smoke began to cover the plain, a large body of Lancers, under General Terahon (who commanded the Cavalry), followed by two light pieces of artillery, could be discovered filing off to operate upon our right flank. To meet this movement, our extreme right regiment (5th Infantry) was ordered to the right and rear under cover of the chaparral, and the adjoining regiment (3d Infantry) was thrown back still further. Terahon advanced in good order; but as he cleared the point of chaparral, he unexpectedly found the 5th Regiment in square, ready to receive him. He passed obliquely by the third front of that regiment, discharging a volley from his *Escopitas*, and wounding five men; then wheeling before the first front, he formed for a charge. During this time the square had remained quietly at shouldered arms, without returning the fire; but when the head of the column of Lancers charging was within thirty paces of the 5th Regiment, the first front was ordered to fire. In an instant thirty or forty saddles were emptied and some confusion produced. Then, just in the very nick of time, came up Lieutenant Ridgely, who had been ordered to the right of the square with two pieces of Ringgold's Battery, and at short quarters gave the Lancers two charges of canister shot. The havoc was great; men and horses were pitched in every direction. The Mexican cavalry retired, followed by their artillery, which, owing to boggy ground, had not even got into battery. The whole of them were handsomely peppered by Ridgely and afterwards by Ringgold, until they finally broke and reached their own lines in confusion. During this time a movement had been perceptible on the enemy's right, evidently with a view to take our left likewise in flank. But a destructive fire from Captain Duncan's Battery, which boldly advanced with his guns *en prolonge* into the plain, and perhaps a glance at the scene just described, had a very cooling effect upon Mexican over-confidence. (They actually brought with them to this field five hundred women, to be employed in pillaging and stripping the dead.)

On our side, confidence was rising from *par* to a *premium*, and, I dare say, we should soon have been at them, "horse, foot, and dragoons," had not an incident occurred which, novel indeed in the history of battles, completely put a stop to the one on hand for the time being. A wad from one of Duncan's guns, falling into a bunch of dry grass, fired the prairie on our left. An attempt was made to extinguish it, but a fine breeze was blowing in a direction parallel to our lines, and in a few minutes the red flames began to dance and pitch into the air high above our heads. Soon this wild fire, beyond the control of man, darted forward, cleaving through the light-blue clouds that had sprung from the cannon's mouth and overspread the plain, hissing and crashing like a mighty Demon of the Prairies roused from his slumber by the voice of battle. Onward he rushed between the contending hosts, belching volumes of murky smoke into their very faces, and lifting his red arms on high, as if he revelled in the midst of human carnage.

In other words, the two armies were completely shut out from each other's sight, and fairly separated by a barrier alike impenetrable to either. The firing on both sides ceased entirely. We drew off a short distance, and having formed square, rested on the ground as we would have done after a drill of an hour and a half. We remained inactive an hour and a half more, during which period the General rode along the line chatting with the officers, and those of different regiments visited each other.

Major Ringgold rode up to our regiment, and I talked with him for half an hour. Alas! when I next saw him a few hours afterwards, he was mortally wounded.

About 3 o'clock P.M., the fire had passed beyond the battle-ground, and the smoke began to clear away; immediately General Taylor prepared to attack the enemy's left. The 3d and 5th Regiments were ordered to cover the wagon-train and our left flank; and the 4th Regiment (ours) was put in advance. We moved in double column at half distance, for as yet we could not see the enemy; it was something like groping in the dark; and to have run blindfold upon the Lancers, unprepared to form square, would not have been the thing.

We at length found the enemy at some distance to *their* left of their former position; they had filed off during the burning of the prairie, and had concentrated all their artillery on their right, probably expecting we would attack them on that flank. As they were now drawn up, an impassable pond covered a greater part of their front, and we did not get sight of them until we were in the act of ascending a swell of land on our side of the pond, at the distance of five hundred yards from their line. Here our artillery unlimbered and opened its fire; while the 4th Regiment, followed by the 1st Brigade, was ordered to endeavor to gain the enemy's left. A flank movement of our column was ordered, and at that time a cannon-shot carried off the lower jaw of an old companion of mine, Captain Page, who was leading the 1st Division; and as I was leading the 2d Division, he fell immediately on my left. As I passed him, poor fellow, he presented a shocking sight. The next instant the head of the soldier on the right of the division was carried away, and his brains were dashed into the faces of those around me. I do not know that I am right in opening to your view such scenes, my dear friend, but they are nevertheless the frequent contrasts to the sublime and beautiful of a battle. On the field, however, you regard these things with much indifference; they seem to occur, as Paddy would say, quite naturally *there*. (Strange to say, Page still lives.)

There was heavy firing of artillery, with more or less effect, on both sides until dark; but, although there was some manœuvring, yet, owing to the character of the ground, we never came to close quarters, and nothing particularly worthy of notice occurred.

Both armies may be said to have slept on the field of battle;—we had advanced and they had retired a little; but our right was not half a mile from their right, and we could distinctly hear the cries of the wounded during the stillness of the night. As soon as the 4th Regiment had taken its position for the night, (for we lay on our arms,) I sought out Ringgold and remained with him until after his wounds were dressed. He held my hand all the time, and talked with me as calmly of the battlefield and on other subjects, as ever he did in his life. Poor fellow! he met his fate like a noble soldier, as he had proved himself during the engagement. I saw him for the last time the next morning before we marched; that morning he was carried to Point Isabel, where he sank, through the shock sustained by his nervous system, on the third day.

At dawn the enemy was discovered to be withdrawing into the chaparral, and General Taylor determined to attack him there.

It was accordingly arranged, that a detachment of infantry and the two eighteen-pounders should be left as a guard to the baggage. The line of battle was formed, and as we advanced, the edge of the chaparral was reconnoitred. It now appeared that the enemy had retired altogether. The country between us and the river was for seven miles a forest of meskeet timber, filled with the thorny undergrowth called *chaparral.* There is through this forest only one road, and on this road are two strong natural defences, (*i. e.* ravines or ponds with steep banks, now dry,) at either of which a stand might be made, with great advantage by the Mexicans, if disposed further to oppose our march. The army had now halted on the prairie, and we were calculating on the chances for another fight. A reconnoitring party was sent forward, and the enemy was found in full force (having received that morning reinforcements from Matamoras) at Resaca de la Palma, about three miles from the scene of the last battle.

This was a well chosen position. The natural strength of the line they occupied was indeed great; and such was their confidence, that La Vega said the next day at General Twiggs' tent,—

"If I had had with me yesterday one hundred thousand dollars in silver, I should have considered it as secure as in the city of Mexico, and I *would have bet the whole of it,* that no ten thousand men on earth could drive us from our position."

This battle was fought as boldly by General Taylor as that of the preceding day had been cautiously. He was himself frequently personally exposed;—on one occasion, a gentleman present having remarked to him,—"General, you are much exposed here;" he replied, "Well, we'll ride forward a little, and the shot will drop behind us," and immediately suited the action to the word. The chaparral or thorny thicket did not admit of any regularity of movement, and it was simply the impetuosity of our men that gained the day.

In passing through the Mexican camp after the battle, there was seen every evidence of Arista's confidence. His property, both public and personal, was arranged with great neatness. His own tents and camp-equipage were of the costliest materials; his whole dinner service, for instance, was of silver, and was estimated in value at a thousand dollars. The outfits of the other general officers—there were nine of them, Ampudia, La Vega, Terahon, Garcia, &c., &c.—were also very stylish. The loss of the enemy was great. I must bid you good-night.

[EXTRACT.]

Camp at Matamoras, Mexico, July 2, 1846.

My dear M——: I send you this on a sheet of General Arista's paper, stamped with the Mexican arms, which among other things fell into our hands at "Resaca," which, by the by, you must translate *Ravine*, although you will not find it so given in the Dictionaries. The names of the battle-grounds of the eighth and ninth are, on the authority of General De La Vega, those by which the positions (favorite encamping-grounds of the Mexicans) have always been known.

Upon my word, it is no trifle to write long letters in camp in such weather as this. A vertical sun comes through the sleazy canvas of which our tents are made, with force enough to bake one's brains, however thick the skull may be; and at night the torment of insects is intolerable, as a single candle brings innumerable musquittos, gnats, and other blood-thirsty votaries of the daughter of chaos, attracted by its light.

I have made very little acquaintance in the town of Matamoras;—the better class of people left the place before it fell into our hands; and there is now very little inducement to seek acquaintance beyond what may be acquired by riding through the streets.

We had quite an exciting time recently on the occasion of the visit of the delegation from the Legislature of

Louisiana, sent to express the thanks of that body to General Taylor and his army,—and to announce their resolution to present the General with a sword.

The day after the ceremonies were gone through, and they had been entertained by the General, the right wing of the army invited them to dinner. In this, General Worth, who commands the left, declined to join, at least so it is said;—at all events, I know he declined an invitation to appear as a guest. The 4th Regiment is in the right wing, so of course we were there. The entertainment was given in town at *Arista's Headquarters*, a fine large mansion. It so happened that the Governor of Texas (Henderson, who married Miss Cox of Philadelphia) had just arrived, and with him General Lamar, General Johnston, and others, who were all invited. The old hero was of course very much toasted, and very highly complimented by all the distinguished personages present; but he was in fine spirits and seemed to enjoy it all very much, although he commonly takes these things very composedly.

We are still lying inactive, and I fear likely to be so for some time, although the first step to an advance on Monterey, that is, the occupancy of the Reinosa, has been effected by a battalion of the 1st Infantry recently arrived. The cause of our not advancing is the want of means to move our supplies; for we must take them with us. There is corn and wheat grown in the country in the rear of Monterey, and there is also an abundance of cattle and sheep; but we cannot depend upon drawing our supplies from the enemy's country,—they may easily remove or destroy the breadstuffs and drive off the cattle, and this they will certainly do to a greater or less extent. What will be the result, I am sure I can form no conjecture. The more I see of the Mexican character, the more I am disposed to distrust any calculation, whatever that may be, made concerning them. Adieu.

CAMP AT MATAMORAS, July 12, 1846.

MY DEAR M——: Accounts from the interior of Mexico, as we get them overland, are conflicting; though they all tend to show a disposition, on the part of the ruling class, to carry on the war. The army now has a strong influence, and of course it is to their interest to sustain a President raised up by the war-party, in a war which supports *them*. What effect the mediation of England will have, remains to be seen, though I suppose she will rather dictate to Mexico her policy, than argue as a friendly adviser. If England insists on an immediate acceptance by Mexico of such terms of adjustment as the United States, in a spirit of liberality, may offer, I shall hope before a great while to see you all again.

General Taylor is making every exertion to put in depot at Camargo the necessary supplies for a forward movement upon Monterey; but he is out of all patience at the dilatory movements of Government Agents in forwarding the indispensable means of transportation. The 1st and 7th Regiments (Regulars) have gone up the river, the first to Reinosa, the second to Camargo. When our regiment will move, I can form no idea.

The Rio Grande is looming with the swell produced by excessive rains in the mountain regions. It is over its banks here. The damage to the crops in the country about Camargo is very great, and the town itself is reported to be swept almost entirely away.

The rains here for several weeks were almost constant; and the 7th Regiment (or part of it), that started to march to the last-named town, was compelled to make its way to the river and take a steamboat, the country being altogether under water and impassable. The weather has, however, been fine for a week past, and I am in hopes the roads will be better by the time our regiment is ordered to move, as I shall enjoy myself much more on the march, if the movement is by land, than I could do on board a steamer. Adieu.

Camargo, Sept. 21, 1846.

My dear H——: I arrived here yesterday after a passage of ten days from New Orleans. We did not leave the mouth of the river until the morning of the 12th inst.; ran on in three days to Brazos Santiago, and having passed the mouth of the Rio Grande, we came from the latter to this place in three days more.

Here I learned that Major Thomas had been assigned to General Butler's Division, and myself to General Patterson's. The last-named division remains on the Rio Grande; Headquarters at this place. I shall thus be deprived of the opportunity of entering Monterey with the army. They are now doubtless in that city, and the Stars and Stripes are probably floating over the fortifications which surround the crest of the eminence, on the summit of which is situated the Bishop's Palace.

I found here a letter from Captain Henry, of the 3d Regiment, dated Marin, (fifteen miles from Monterey,) September 16th. He says: "General Taylor with our Brigade (the 3d and 4th Regiments) and the 2d Brigade, composing the 1st Division, arrived here yesterday. Worth with his Division will arrive to-day, and Butler will be up to-morrow.

Major Bliss, in a little note, says: "The country around us (Marin) is beautiful beyond description; we have a view of the town of Monterey from the steeple at this village, &c." He sends a little sketch of Monterey. . . .

Adieu.

CAMARGO, Sept. 28, 1846.

MY DEAR M——: Last evening Captain Eaton, Aide-de-Camp to General Taylor, arrived here with the intelligence of the taking of Monterey. He proceeds to Washington with the official despatches, and consequently remained with us but a few hours. His account of the battles was intensely interesting to us. They had terrible fighting for three successive days, and our loss is very great; but our flag now waves over the Citadel of Monterey. The Mexicans had seven thousand Regulars, and several thousand *Rancheros* or irregulars, and had strongly fortified the city and the high grounds around it. Our force was between five thousand and six thousand. Our gallant fellows had to take by assault four small forts, besides the Bishop's Palace, (a very strong and important point,) before they entered the town. Here the severest struggle took place, and many of our finest officers and men fell in the street-fight, being exposed to the most destructive fire from the house-tops. But they gained ground street by street, and left their own dead mingled with those of the enemy who opposed them. The 3d and 4th Regiments covered themselves with glory, but their loss has been great indeed. I have to lament the fall of several warm friends. It was not my fortune to be with them during those days. Eaton told me that General Taylor more than once expressed a wish that McCall was there. They have gained imperishable fame.

I have letters from Colonel Garland, Major Bliss, and others. Bliss says, September 23d: "We arrived before this place on the 19th, and on the 21st our operations commenced. Brigadier-General Worth detached with his Division and Hoy's Regiment (Mounted Texans) in rear of the town,—met the enemy in the morning, and defeated him with considerable loss. In the afternoon the troops of his Division carried two of the heights which command the Saltillo Road. In the meantime, the 1st Regular Division, and General Butler's Division of Volunteers, became engaged on the left of the town, under the immediate orders of the commanding General, and succeeded in carrying a strong battery and some adjacent defences. They occupied a portion of the city for a considerable time, and were then withdrawn. Yesterday, the 2d Division carried the two remaining works in rear of the town; one of them, the Bishop's Palace, being an important position. Last night the enemy evacuated several of his batteries in the lower edge of the town, and to-day our people have driven him back almost to the Plaza, which he yet holds. With that position and the citadel he seems disposed to make a stubborn resistance. During this period, the 2d Division (Worth's) has also advanced into the town on the left.

"The operations on the left of the town on the 21st were attended with a very heavy sacrifice of men. Two hundred and twenty-five killed, wounded, and missing in the volunteer division, while the 3d and 4th Regiments, Infantry, (Regulars,) are almost destroyed. The other successes were obtained with a comparatively small loss. I enclose a list believed to be accurate of the officers killed, wounded, &c."

"LIST OF KILLED AND WOUNDED.

Killed.—3d Infantry: Capt. L. N Morris, Capt. G. P. Field, Capt. and Brevet-Maj. P. N. Barbour, 1st Lieut. and Adjt. D. S. Irwin, 2d Lieut. R. Hastell.

4th Infantry: 1st Lieut. and Adjt. C. N. Hoskins, 2d Lieut. I. S. Woods.

8th Infantry: Capt. McKavett.

Wounded.—Brevet-Maj. J. K. F. Mansfield, (Engineers,) slightly; Capt. W. E. Williams, (Top. Engineers,) severely; Brevet-Maj. J. J. Abercrombie, slightly.

1st Infantry: Capt. J. H. Lamott, severely; 1st Lieut. J. C. Ferrett, severely.

3d Infantry: Maj. W. W. Lear, severely; Capt. Bainbridge, slightly.
4th Infantry: 1st Lieut. R. H. Graham, severely, (three times.)
5th Infantry: 1st Lieut. H. B. Rossell, severely.
7th Infantry: 2d Lieut. G. Patten, severely.
8th Infantry: 2d Lieut. G. Wainwright, badly.

Of the Volunteers, Gen. Butler was slightly wounded, and fourteen officers killed and wounded."

Capt. Eaton brings up the accounts to the 24th. That morning General Ampudia proposed a capitulation; after some delay, the terms were agreed upon, General Ampudia, commanding the Mexicans, having had a long conference with General Taylor. Three commissioners were appointed by General Taylor—viz., General Worth, Gov. Henderson of Texas, and Colonel Davis of Mississippi (son-in-law of Gen. Taylor), all ambitious men and gallant soldiers; and the terms agreed upon were, that the Mexican army should march out with their arms, and retire *west* of a certain line, thirty miles beyond Monterey; and an armistice for eight weeks was agreed upon, Ampudia pledging himself that his Government was about to make a treaty of peace. These terms were granted in consideration of the Mexicans having made a brave defence of their town, and to prevent the further effusion of blood, for our gallant fellows had still much hard work before them. I have a good deal to do just now and must therefore close my letter. Good night.

Camargo, October 26, 1846.

My dear H——: . . . My last letter gave you the first accounts we received of the taking of Monterey, which intelligence reached us, as I recollect, on the 27th of September; and looking back at dates, I am ashamed to confess that I have suffered a month to pass without writing to you. But I have been so constantly occupied in my vocation, that time has slipped by without my taking note of it. My office is at the corner of the Plaza, with a door opening directly on each street; these affording the only access for light and air, have to be left open. One would think these people had adopted the old English window-tax, so chary are they of disfiguring their adobe walls with such conveniences. The Plaza being the point of attraction for all volunteers who visit the town from their camps around, they are very apt, prompted by business or curiosity, to call upon the Adjutant-General, who they think must of necessity know all their wants and how to supply them, as well as all their private grievances and how to assuage them. I am frequently at my desk from after breakfast till five P.M., writing orders, examining returns sent in, or making out my own, and answering or inditing letters. At such times I am often greatly annoyed by these pestiferous fellows, who sometimes force their way past my orderly and vociferously commence an exaggerated complaint against their company officer. They are not to be put off by being told that their Colonel is the proper person to appeal to, having very likely tried that scheme before they came to me, and received small satisfaction.

I was so worried in this way a few days ago, while making out an elaborate report for the Adjutant-General at Washington, that I had like to have gone mad from the prodigious effort it required to control my temper.

But I was greatly amused by a visit I received late at night a short time since. Just as I was about closing my office to prepare for bed, there was a rap at the door, and who should it be at that hour but Captain M——, of the —— Cavalry. He begged me to excuse the intrusion, but he had come to ask my advice; he had been ordered in arrest by the General commanding his Brigade, and he wished to know whether, under the peculiar circumstances, he should obey the arrest. "You know," said he, "that the General, the Colonel of my regiment, and myself, are all cousins of each other. Well, we came over to town this evening and happened to meet at the sutler's, where we had something to drink in a very friendly spirit; but in the course of conversation the General spoke disparagingly and highly disrespectfully of General Taylor. Against this I mildly remonstrated; but [illegible] he continued in the same vein, I told him decidedly I would not allow such language to be spoken in my presence.

"'Do you know who you are speaking to?' he blurted out in a most imperious tone. Being a little thrown off my guard by the tone and manner in which this was spoken, I replied tartly enough,—'I am speaking to Brigadier-General Thomas ——. And who made you a Brigadier-General? Why, James K. Polk made you a Brigadier-General, and that's more than God Almighty ever did for you.' Whereupon I was ordered to my tent in arrest. I have now told you exactly what passed, and I wish to know whether I ought to obey the arrest or not."

I replied, "You must certainly obey the arrest, for if you do not, you lay yourself liable to the charge of disobedience of orders; but if you call on the General in the morning, I have no doubt the matter will be adjusted without difficulty. At any rate, I will see that nothing comes of it."

The Captain, who is a gentleman of refinement and of the most brilliant talents, which have rendered him ever conspicuous wheresoever his duty or his pleasure carried him, thanked me for the advice I had given him and took his leave. The next morning before breakfast I received a communication from the Brigadier, enclosing charges against his cousin, the Captain. I put them away in a pigeon-hole, until I should hear more on the subject. About noon I received a second communication from the General, requesting permission to withdraw the charges, and asking that they be returned by the bearer. Afterwards I learned that the Captain had called on the General as I recommended, and simply asked his cousin, "What do you think General Taylor will say, when he reads in the proceedings of the court which tries me, of the language you used when speaking of him? This was a phase in the matter that had not struck the General before, and the affair was settled as I have stated.

I received last night a letter from my friend Major Mansfield, of the Engineers, who greatly distinguished himself at Monterey, and is now confined to his couch with a wound in the leg. He tells me that Santa Ana is at San Louis Potosi, with Almonte and General Negretè, in office, and Paredes as a volunteer. He has there eight thousand Regulars, and is believed to be urged on by the people of Mexico to continue the war. It is reported he will soon be surrounded by some thirty thousand men. The inhabitants of Saltillo however, he says, refused to allow Ampudia, as he retired, to fortify their city, saying that he had spent much time and money in completing the defences of Monterey, a position stronger by nature than Saltillo; and that they would not suffer their property to be destroyed in a fruitless defence. They have since sent General Taylor word that, if he will advance with the Regulars alone, they will remain at home and receive him kindly; but if he brings on the Volunteers, they will abandon the town and disperse with their families in the interior. The troops here are much mortified by being kept in the rear, while their comrades have been gaining laurels in front. What will be the next move, after the armistice is over, I am really unable to tell you. It is thought that General Taylor, after placing strong garrisons at Saltillo, Monterey, Lénares, Victoria, and San Fernando, thus securing the Northern Department by a chain of posts from the first-named to the Gulf, a line running but little south of east from its beginning, will move on Tampico. My old and valued friend, Colonel Belknap, arrived here from Monterey yesterday, on business for General Taylor, and returns to-morrow. I shall accompany him for the purpose of seeing the country and studying the battle-grounds, and also to get my horse, who is with Bragg's battery. This is my favorite horse Champion.

When I was commissioned Assistant Adjutant General with rank of Major, in May last, and ordered by General Taylor to New Orleans, to muster out of service the Louisiana Volunteers, I left my horse with Ridgley, who then was in command of Ringgold's Battery. Subsequently this gallant officer was killed by the fall of his horse on a large slippery rock in one of the streets of Monterey, and Bragg was ordered to the command of this battery.

P. S.—November 1st.—I have received my horse Champion; he is in fine condition and full of spirit.

MONTEREY, November 24, 1846.

MY DEAR H——: My visit to this place has been full of interest and instruction. The natural strength of the place is great; the works of defence are extensive and well planned, giving an advantage to the besieged over the besiegers of at least five to one. If, then, you take into calculation that the Mexican forces were, in this contest, at least double our own, you may form some idea of the gallantry and hardihood of our troops in carrying the different heights, one after another, by storm. I have been very kindly received by the General, and dined with him to-day. Bliss, in whose tent I pass much of my time, tells me frankly, that the credit given to him in your

Eastern newspapers for the strength and force of the General's military correspondence, is due to the General himself; that the language is the General's, sometimes, but not always, slightly polished by himself;—for instance, I asked him, for I am on terms of intimacy that would warrant it, whether the famous dispatch, sent from Point Isabel on the instant of marching to the relief of Fort Brown, and when the Mexicans were reported in great force in advance of that place, the General said, "*If I meet the enemy, in whatever force, I will fight him.*"—I say, I asked Bliss whether that despatch was the General's or his own. He assured me seriously that it was the General's entire, and that he had copied it *verbatim* from the old chief's handwriting. If you recollect what a noise this laconic message to the authorities at Washington, who at the time were so anxious as to the welfare of Taylor's little army made, you will admire the old General still more for his plain, manly tone of expression, as well as Bliss for his honest candor in rejecting the title to credit due to his chief; and which many a man of less noble impulses would, by indirection, have suffered to pass for his own.

The scenery in this region is magnificent. There are no mountains on the Atlantic slope that compare with these of the Sierra Madre. There are, apparently overhanging the town of Monterey, though a mile or more off, the Bishop's Mitre and the Saddle Mountain, two detached and precipitous peaks strikingly resembling the objects whose names they bear. In the former are two flat points of solid rock, of great height, from which the pelting storms of centuries have swept away the earth-covering,—if, indeed, they ever had any since their disruption, when they emerged from the unknown depths below, into chaotic confusion at the surface,—or, perchance, they stand now as they did when first they saw the light, it matters very little to my discursive pen; be it understood, however, that these two shafts gradually enlarging, at their junction form the Episcopal crown with such remarkable exactness, that no one can glance that way, particularly if belonging to the Romish Church, with a slight sprinkling of Heathenism infused therein,—as is the case with nine-tenths of the creatures in human form who dwell in this more than beautiful, this most fertile region, whose climate possesses all the charms of the subtropical regions of the earth,—without for a moment feeling that he is in the supernatural presence of the Head of his Church. The latter mountain, when viewed from the town of Monterey, has so clear and perfect an outline of the profile or side-view of a Mexican saddle, with its horn in front, its high cantel in rear, and its snug seat between the two, that one would almost be inclined to think that the inventor of the saddle had taken his design from this mountain top, which is conspicuous at the distance of fifty or sixty miles.

But the most wonderful phenomenon in the natural scenery of this romantic land is witnessed among the mountains beyond Marin at sunrise. Of this grand spectacle, Colonel Belknap had spoken on the way; and he made a point of reaching, by a forced march, a certain camping-ground, where grass and water, indispensable requisites, sometimes only met with at long intervals, were to be found. This camp-ground was ten miles from the position he wished to reach before sunrise the next morning, in order to see the effect of the *first* shaft of light cast above the horizon by the great luminary.

Accordingly, as the moon was full, we mounted our horses at half past three A. M., and leaving the escort to get their breakfast, and follow at a more moderate pace, we urged our horses over rough mountains, and through boggy or murky vales without intermission, until we reached a slight elevation, half a mile east of the road we had travelled, and which we left at right angles to gain this rise of ground. Here we drew up and turned our horses' heads to the east, just five minutes before the glorious sun made his appearance in an atmosphere clear and resplendent. There was directly between that brilliant point on the horizon and the knoll on which we had taken our stand, an open gateway through the Sierra Madre,—the highest mountains east of the great American chain,—of which the Rocky Mountains are the representatives in North America. This gateway was defined by two high perpendicular walls,—mountain sides,—the result of a disruption or great breach of an immense flat-topped mountain, whose parts had been cast asunder by some violent convulsion in a former geological era. Here, then, we sat upon our horses, intently gazing at the east, while the sun rose slowly into view, directly through this gateway; and Colonel Belknap skilfully turned my attention to this point, for he had only told me of a grand sight to be witnessed here at sunrise; and it was indeed a grand sight, as the sun rose and cast his broad, unbridled beams full in our faces, while the gate-posts and the mountain sides to the right and left were dark in shade. But when the sun had fully risen, the Colonel called to me to turn and look to the rear. I whirled my horse about,—but oh! gracious powers! what a sight was now presented to my astonished senses. I was struck dumb with admiration and amazement. And now, my dear H., having looked with wonder and delight upon this inconceivable semblance of reality, a picture whose lights and shades no artist's skill can portray, no graphic pen describe,—would you believe it!—I am tempted (it must be the prompting of my evil genius), in spite of a warning sense of the incompetency of the pen of man to convey a just estimate of the scene I witnessed, *to tell you what I saw and* *what I felt.* There was, then, at the distance of two or three miles, and directly facing the sun, a detached, broad, pyramidal mountain, whose summit towered above the clouds, and whose triangular front, from its base to its summit, was one unbroken sheet of blazing diamonds! while two other detached peaks, one on the right, the other on the left, were so deeply in the shade, that their outlines were barely visible: the heavens, too, above, were also dark and obscure; while this magic mountain flashed, and burst into flames of red, orange, blue, and green, with a brilliancy inconceivable. There appeared to be individual gems of monstrous size, whose refractions and reflections were as the work of sorcery and enchantment; or, rather, as if the hand of the Great Architect of the Universe had been passed over the surface of the mountain. It was magnificent,—it was beautiful beyond measure,—it was incomparably the grandest spectacle that the senses of man could measure. I was called from the rapturous delight with which I had been filled, by the Colonel calling out, "Study it well; it lasts but eight minutes." And so in truth it did. In eight short minutes the sun had passed the gateway, and this wondrous scene faded into obscurity like a dream. Oh, how sad I felt when the magic mountain stood before me now as a gray-clad pyramid, without one ray of sun to cheer it. Nor, indeed, did we see the sun again for twenty minutes. We, without concert, drove the spurs into our horses and regained the road. The sole thought, the sole feeling, the sole conversation, as we rode on into Marin, was the wondrous incident of the morning. It is only for a few weeks at this season of the year, when the sun rises directly opposite this gateway through the Sierra Madre, that the scene we had just witnessed is opened for the contemplation of mortal man. We at length reached Marin, after a gallop of five miles, for no other gait would have been endurable after the excitement through which we had passed. Here we breakfasted at a tolerable hotel, and in the afternoon reached here, as I have already told you. Adieu.

P. S.—I forgot to tell you that at Marin I saw some fine specimens of the rock of the Brilliant Mountain. It is, as I had supposed, "*Selenite, or crystallized sulphate of lime*," a common rock in the mountains of this region. I have seen it *cropping out* in vast patches on the mountain sides, to be seen for miles, and glistening in the sunshine like great plates of glass. The mountain I have been speaking of, as the amazing object of our ride, had evidently been cleft through its centre, and together with the two peaks which now stood near it, hurled from a spur of the Sierra Madre not far distant. But never shall I forget the impression its wonderful appearance, when lighted up by the sun bursting through the well-defined gap in the Sierra Madre, made upon my senses.

[The following note from Col. Bliss was received Jan. 4, 1847.]

MONTEMORELOS, December 25, 1846.

TO MAJOR GEO. A. MCCALL.

DEAR MAJOR:—Your notes of the 16th and 18th were received on the 24th. We have been so constantly on the move for nearly a fortnight, that I have had no chance to write and as little to send anything to your Headquarters. We should be more full to-day but for the expectation of seeing you soon.

The "stampede" at Saltillo was rather a failure, but it turned out well enough, for it has drawn in the troops towards Saltillo, and induced vigilance, the military virtue we most need. We have at Saltillo and Monterey from 6000 to 7000 men, with eighteen pieces of field artillery (harnessed);

enough to whip anything that can come at this season from San Luis. Quitman has about 2000 men, with Bragg's former battery under Thomas, but no cavalry. It is among possibilities that they will give him a touch from Tula; but I doubt it, as they cannot bring artillery through the pass. We shall lose no time in joining him, expecting to reach Linares on the 28th, and Victoria, I suppose, in six or seven days after. We have General Twiggs' Division, say 1500 strong, with Ringgold's Battery — all in excellent condition, and one squadron of dragoons to execute some reconnoissances in the mountains.

We have received indications of peace from several different quarters, and if "coming events cast their shadows before," it may come, *quien sabe?*

This is a delightful region, abounding in sugar and the best oranges I ever saw. In Victoria, we hear, they are still better. Though more than fifty miles from Monterey, we have the Saddle Mountain distinctly in view.

The 4th is the garrison of the citadel at Monterey. Col. Whistler is in immediate command, while Col. Garland is Governor of the town.

Our General, quite well, desires his regards to yourself and General Patterson, in which I beg to join. Hoping to meet you soon, I remain, most truly Yours.

W. W. S. BLISS.

Camp near VICTORIA, January 5, 1847.

MY DEAR M——: I am happy to inform you that our column arrived here at two o'clock P. M., yesterday; General Taylor, with Twiggs' Brigade, having entered the town about four hours before us. General T., as I informed you, marched from Monterey with Twiggs' Brigade of Regulars, and Quitman's Brigade of Volunteers, on the 13th December, and on his arrival at Monte-Morelos on the 17th, received a despatch from General Worth, saying that Santa Ana was advancing on him at Saltillo with 25,000 or 30,000 men. He accordingly returned with the Regulars, and directed Quitman to proceed to this point with the Volunteers, at the same time sending a despatch to General Patterson, to observe the enemy in the direction of Tula, and drive him back, if accessible. This news hurried us on, as Quitman, who would be in advance of us at this point, might be exposed. General Taylor marched back to Monterey, and then *back again* hither.

It now appears that Worth's cry of *wolf* was precipitate—the best information we have, being that Santa Ana is still at San Luis; though Worth has a second time reported the advance of the Mexicans. The result of all is, as I have stated. I don't know when I have been more delighted than I was last evening on riding into General Taylor's camp, (near a mile from our own,) where I met all my old friends, the Regulars. I felt as if I had got home after a long absence. I found them all in fine health after a march of twenty days.

We are in the region of oranges and sugar-cane; there is enough, all through this country, of the very finest oranges I ever ate, to supply the whole army; and they are eaten in hundreds of thousands.

The town of Victoria is about seven miles from the foot of the Sierra Madre, whose lofty summits are clothed with mist. The sun at noon has all the potency common in this latitude, while the nights are uncomfortably cool.

What stay we shall make here, or what our next movements may be, I cannot tell you. General Taylor has arranged his plans; but learning that Scott is in the country and about to undertake different enterprises, he hourly expects orders from that officer, which will change his own. General Taylor has been badly treated in this matter, and he feels it sensibly.

We learn that the Mexican Congress is rather at loggerheads on the question of the election of President; but the common opinion is that Santa Ana will be the successful candidate. It is said that he has sent five thousand men to the city to arrange that business with his friends in Congress.

I am compelled to break off a scrawl I hardly know of what; so good-bye. I will add a line or two when an express is to be sent off.

Wednesday Evening, Jan. 6.

General Taylor has just sent an orderly to inform us that he will send off an express in the morning; so I will add a few lines, but can give you nothing further as to our movements. No news yet from General Scott, though we are in hourly expectation.

We had rather a hard march hither from Matamoras; eighteen to twenty-six miles a day, frequently without water; and the water was at some of the halting-places bad enough — a mere pond, surrounded by thousands of horses and mules running at large, and consequently about the color and thickness of chocolate. The brigade had been divided into two columns, a day apart. On the direct route from Santa Teresa to San Fernando, about forty-two miles, there is no water; though by taking a route a few miles further south, there is a pond about half-way. This our guide took us to; but the rear column by some negligence took the direct road instead of following our trail, and were compelled to go through to San Fernando without water. They got in about ten A.M. on the second day, pretty well worn out. Here we were detained two days, cutting down the steep banks of the river San Fernando, to get our wagons over. We made the whole distance to this place, about two hundred miles, in twelve marching days.

It has been exceedingly warm all day, and the wind has just shifted to the north. I dread the thought of these *Northers;* they go through and through one. I must prepare for a cold and blustering night. Please forward this to our father. Adieu.

Steamer Alabama, off Anton Lizardo,
March 7, 1847.

My dear M——: I wrote to you just before we left Tampico, whence we sailed on the first instant, and arrived here on the morning of the fifth. Our fleet of transports is coming in very well, and when all arrive, we shall have about thirteen thousand men,—enough, I hope, to take Vera Cruz without a very hard contest.

Yesterday the General-in-Chief, with the Generals of his army corps, viz., Twiggs, Worth, Patterson, Quitman, Pillow, and General Totten, of the Engineers, their staffs and the engineers, &c., made a reconnoissance in a small steamer, along the coast from this point to the town. While off the castle, after we had just lunched very comfortably through the hospitality of the naval officer who commanded the steamer, our little vessel was saluted by the Mexicans with one of their heavy Paixan guns. We were then at the distance of one mile and a half, and the shell falling short, Commodore Conner, who was of the party, and of course regulating the movements of the boat, ordered the steam to be stopped, to the end, as it were, to let them have a fair trial of their skill in gunnery. We lay thus before the castle until they had fired about eight or nine shells, some of them passing some thirty feet above our heads and exploding afterwards; others exploding before they reached us, until they began to calculate the charge and the length of the fuse with considerable accuracy, and to scatter the fragments of the shell around the boat. The Commodore then in his gentle manner remarked to the General-in-Chief, "that he thought we might now proceed," and the latter assenting, we continued our course, followed by three or four parting shells. The castle is certainly a very strong work, and I doubt very much whether it would be practicable to take it with any naval force that we could bring before it. Our work must be done with shells, for they have sent out no guns of calibre as great as those in the castle.

Their force is variously estimated, and there is no means of ascertaining what numbers we shall have brought against us. But about that we do not feel much concern.

The probability is, that we shall effect a landing to-night, opposite the Island of Sacrificios, at a point between two and three miles below the town. There is a ridge of sand-hills about half a mile from this point, running in rear of the town to within the distance of five hundred or four hundred yards of it. On this, as our first parallel, batteries will be established.

I am now interrupted by official calls and must leave off, but I will endeavor to add something before the mail closes.

P.S.—I have nothing further with respect to our movements to add, except that it is decided that we land before daylight to-morrow morning.

We have received a Mexican newspaper containing the report of Santa Ana, of an engagement with General Taylor, near *Agua Nueva* (a short distance from Saltillo, on the San Luis road). General Taylor has probably something less than six thousand men. Santa Ana is reported to have had some seventeen thousand. Santa Ana does not give his own numbers, but sets down those of General Taylor at nine thousand. He says he has lost *one thousand*, killed and wounded, and General Taylor *two thousand*, and that he (Santa Ana) is compelled to retire for want of bread and rice for his wounded; but that if he gains these, he will return to the charge. They fought, he says, all day long on the 22d and 23d ult.; that he was on horseback twelve hours each day, and that his wound had given him much trouble. The inference to be drawn from all this is, that *Old Zach* has flogged him very sufficiently; though, from the disparity of forces and of artillery, it is to be supposed, not without severe loss. If we say that the Mexicans lost two thousand and our troops five hundred, we shall probably come nearer the truth. The news has caused much gratulation among our old General's friends.

March 9, 10 o'clock A. M.

The prospect of a *Norther* caused the landing to be deferred, and we are still on shipboard;—so I have broken open my letter to add another line of *later date*, though I can give you nothing of interest beyond what I have already done. The anticipated Norther has not come, and the *surf-boats* are now going round to the transports and picking up the troops to be transferred to the ships of war; but whether we shall make the descent to-day or not, is uncertain. It will depend on circumstances. One thing I regret is this: the vessel carrying the horses of our division staff has not yet come in. I have two favorite horses on board, and feel concern for their welfare; besides that, I am thus thrown ashore on foot, and must trust to chance to catch up a horse, if I can. Send this to our kind father. Affectionately ever yours.

CAMP WASHINGTON, near VERA CRUZ, March 13, 1847.

MY DEAR M——: To-day has been comparatively quiet, the investment having just been completed, and the enemy driven within the walls. But few shots have been fired from the town or castle, and no damage done that I have heard of. Our headquarters are now in an old convent in rear of the town, and I have a chance to write upon a table.

Our movements I will briefly describe:—We effected a landing about three miles below the town on the evening of the ninth. The next morning, after General Worth's Brigade (which forms our right) had taken its position in the line of investment, — which it did after some slight skirmishing—three wounded on our part, and some greater loss on the part of the enemy,—we commenced establishing our Division. The first Brigade (General Pillow) advanced into the chaparral, to dislodge the enemy, who held the building we now occupy, the magazine some five hundred yards distant, and the intermediate thicket. Here there was some sharp skirmishing, which I had the gratification of witnessing, out of the reach of shot. The enemy was driven at every point by the 1st and 2d Pennsylvania, and 1st and 2d Tennessee Regiments, who behaved very handsomely, following up the Mexicans to the crest of the next sand-hill, whence, after a slight resistance they were finally routed and driven under the guns of the town. Their loss was a few killed and wounded, the former left on the ground, while ours was *nothing*. Thus we gained possession of one half the ground we were to occupy. The magazine contained a large number of signal rockets, and one hundred and twenty boxes of shrapnel shells.

The next morning the enemy came out to the advanced point of our line, and soon our position was saluted with shells and eighteen-pounder shot in very considerable numbers. Here, on the open sand-hills, there was a very pretty little affair between the enemy and the South Carolina and part of the Georgia Regiments, which was all in open ground like the stage of a theatre; but here we were near enough to have a fair sprinkling of musket-balls and eighteen-pounder shot. In fifteen minutes the enemy was driven; our loss was, wounded, Lieutenant-Colonel Dickinson and five men of the South Carolina Regiment, and three men of the Georgia Regiment. The loss of the enemy was about double; we gained three horses, escopitas, and lances, the lancers having fallen.

Thus we cleared the ground we had to occupy, and then came forward General Twiggs' Brigade, which forms the left, and extends to the sea on the north of the town, as does Worth's on the south. Twiggs gained his position without more than slight skirmishing, as we had done before him. His loss was also trifling, and to-day the investment is complete, extending between seven and eight miles, and enclosing the town.

To-morrow, at ten o'clock A. M., the several brigades, two of the Regular Army and three of Volunteers, commence a simultaneous movement upon the town, *i. e.* to close up the line; but I suppose nothing more will be done, as we have not yet landed the heavy artillery, and cannot expect to make any impression on the town without.

We have had yesterday and to-day a horrid *Norther*, which has made the sand-hills and plains as dreadful as those to which Napoleon's troops were exposed in Africa. I had to ride some miles yesterday to visit the different brigades, through a perfect hurricane of sand; I could scarcely force my horse along, and for the day almost lost my eyesight.

The only thing to-day worthy of note, (excepting that they have been amusing themselves by throwing shot and shell among us,) is that the navy has allowed a French bark to run the blockade, at about one o'clock P. M., and safely anchor on the inside of the castle. This is the second or third instance of the kind; and the former vessels having been laden with arms and munitions of war, it is probable that this one is also.

We are lying near enough to the town to see everything distinctly with our glasses; it is walled all round, a fort at the junction of the wall on either side with the sea, and four redans intermediate; the castle and town mount three hundred guns of heavy calibre. I can add no more.

CAMP WASHINGTON, near VERA CRUZ, March 23, 1847.

MY DEAR SISTER:—I avail myself of a moment before the sailing of the Princeton steamship, which takes Commodore Conner home, (he has been relieved by Commodore Perry,) to tell you of the progress of the siege.

Having got seven mortars in battery yesterday, at two o'clock P. M. General Scott summoned the town to surrender; saying, that, if *that* were given up, he would not erect any batteries against the castle *there* in order to save the effusion of blood of non-combatants and great destruction of property that must ensue. The Commandant, *Morales*, replied very politely, that he felt in honor bound to defend both City and Castle to the last.

Hereupon our little battery opened its fire upon the city. (Of fifty mortars and fifty siege-guns ordered here, but ten mortars and eight guns have arrived.) This was immediately replied to by all the guns of the defence that could be brought to bear; say five to one of ours. The navy co-operated by bringing two steamers and four gunboats, in all eight guns, under a point of land in rear of our batteries, and firing over the heads of our men into the city. This state of things lasted till dark, when the navy ceased firing; and the city only delivered shots at long intervals during the night. Our mortar-battery kept up a steady fire unceasingly; every shell, as we could perceive from our position which is at right angles with the line of fire of the battery, falling into the most important parts of the city, and exploding as it fell.

Our loss up to sundown was but two killed,—one of whom, I regret to say, was Captain Vinton of the Artillery, who had charge of the battery at the time,—the other was a private. No loss has fallen upon us since. The loss of the enemy it is impossible to tell, but our shells have been so rapidly delivered, and with such accuracy all the time, from four P. M. yesterday until seven A. M. to-day, (at which time I am writing,) that the destruction both of property and life is probably great.

Owing to the want of guns, ours not having arrived, we have called on the Navy for a battery of six heavy pieces, which is about being completed in front of the divisions. Three of the guns were brought up (a distance of two or two and a half miles) from the landing last evening, with immense labor, through the heavy sands, by about one thousand five hundred men. The officers and men of the Navy have the privilege of fighting these guns, and we have here Captain Aulick, Commander McKenzie, and Lieutenant H. Ingersoll; they passed the night with our mess, and will sit down to breakfast with us in a few moments. Their battery will not be in readiness to open its fire probably before night.

1½ o'clock A. M., March 23.

Since the above was written, a Mexican has been taken. He left the town at eight o'clock last evening. At that time, he said, much damage had already been done; one officer of rank had been severely wounded, and I regret to say some of its inhabitants; the shells penetrating into the houses without regard to the character of the tenants; but that cannot be helped.

The General-in-Chief has prevailed upon Commodore Conner to wait a day or two, in hopes of sending by him, *directly*, despatches, announcing the fall of the city. And Ingersoll, who is with us, tells us it is probable he may return with the Commodore; I therefore keep my letter open to tell you how we get on from time to time, as I can find leisure. Yesterday the firing was kept up on both sides with great spirit, but, incredible to say, on our part without any loss whatever. It is almost miraculous; shot are flying over our heads, and shells falling in the midst of our men, sometimes absolutely burying one or two under the sand thrown up, and notwithstanding this, not a man has been hurt. The Mexicans are fine artillerists, and we are now at the game wherein their strength lies; but if we are compelled to take the city finally by assault, it will then be our turn to show that we are not only fine artillerists, but that our men are their superiors in all respects. Their loss already must be greatly beyond anything we have yet suffered.

March 24, 2 o'clock P. M.

This morning has been calm, and the boats have been enabled to land some of the thirteen mortars which had reached the harbor on the evening of the 22d.

The navy battery was got in position and will be covered by ten o'clock this morning. I had just left them when the enemy, having at last discovered what was going on, opened their fire, and in a few minutes after, all our arrangements having been completed, the fire was returned with interest. In a short time their fire (six different batteries had opened on ours) slackened; and I could, half an hour since, discover with my glass great damage done. The Red Barracks, on the right of the St. Barbara work, were knocked to pieces for twenty-five or thirty feet at the west end. The loss on our side was four sailors killed and one officer and two sailors wounded. The firing is at this moment suspended. The *Princeton* is ordered to sail to-morrow morning; I must therefore close my letter to send it on board. Yours, etc.

CAMP WASHINGTON, before Vera Cruz, March 28, 1847.

MY DEAR M——: *Bien, c'est une affaire!*—the crisis is past; they have unconditionally surrendered the City and the Castle! I can scarcely realize the thing. We had not twenty-five pieces in battery until the last day, mortars and battering-pieces; yet the city with seventy-five heavy guns, and the castle with two hundred and fifty, in battery, have yielded; and their garrisons, near 5000 men, yield themselves prisoners of war. The latter are to march out to-morrow at ten o'clock A.M., and lay down their arms. One month ago, as we were leaving Tampico, the general impression of the officers of the army was that we should have a hard struggle, and it was not calculated that the reduction of their strong places would be effected at a less cost than 2000 men. The God of battles has fought with us, for our entire loss does not exceed forty men in killed and wounded; whereas the loss of the enemy is acknowledged to be very great. The destruction of property in the city is excessive; two-thirds of the houses are represented to be much shattered. The town was fired by our shells many times; but the roof of almost every house is of tiles, so that the conflagration did not spread after destroying the interior of the house into which the shell had fallen and exploded. But our mortar batteries fired so rapidly, that at night you might see the shells in a constant stream, following each other into the devoted place; and as they fell, crash after crash indicated the certain and constant work of destruction. Men were dashed to pieces while the surgeons were dressing their wounds; numbers were left howling where they fell. And no retreat was a shelter from this horrid shower of bursting shells. Their yells and screams were heard by ourselves and by our people from one end of the town to the other. Alas! many poor inoffensive creatures suffered with the combatants in this indiscriminate slaughter; and it is grievous, indeed, to relate, that a young lady, the daughter of the British Consul, was killed by a shell that struck his house. I am told that he says he blames no one but himself. He should have left the city, as almost all the families did; but he believed his house bomb-proof.

Our batteries were at work but three days and a half; but the troops, while completing the investment of the city, and while advancing our own works, were almost constantly by day, and occasionally by night, under the fire of the enemy's guns for seventeen days. None of our camps except perhaps General Scott's Headquarters, which also was now and then reached, were out of the range of their guns, and the only thing to be wondered at, is the trifling loss we sustained. I have repeatedly seen an eighteen-pounder shot strike in the midst of a dozen or twenty men without injuring one of them. This kind of thing *did* occur so often at all points of our line, that it is scarcely credible to those who were standing by, and is a frequent subject of conversation among all ranks.

An expedition, land and naval, sets out on the 30th against Alvarado, that much abused place. Brig.-General Quitman, of this division, goes by land; who is to command the naval force, I have not yet learned. A portion of the forces will also march towards the interior as soon as the means of transporting ammunition and provisions can be collected. It is now thought that General Taylor's victory, and the fall of this place, will induce the towns on our march to the city of Mexico, to open their gates as we approach.

I have seized a moment almost every day to scratch off a line or two to you, as I supposed you would feel an interest in our operations.

I have only to add that I am quite well, and ready for anything that may turn up. Adieu.

[*N.B.*—The health of the writer having been greatly impaired, he was recommended by a Board of Surgeons to cross the water and place himself under care of Sir Benjamin Brodie. Having remained abroad one year, he, on his return, reported for duty, and received the following order.]

Special Orders, }
No. 69. }

[EXTRACT.]

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY, New York, Nov. 8, 1849.

1. Having reported for duty, Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel George A. McCall, Major 3d Infantry, will take the first suitable opportunity to proceed to Santa Fé, New Mexico, and there report for duty with his regiment, to the commanding officer of the Ninth Military Department.

By command of Major-Genl. SCOTT.

IRWIN McDOWELL,
Asst. Adjt. General.

[A few days after the foregoing order came to hand, the following letter from the Secretary of War was received.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, Washington, Nov. 12, 1849.

SIR:—By a recent order from general headquarters, I am informed that, having reported for duty, you have been ordered to your regiment in New Mexico. I desire, before you proceed to join your command, that you will do me the favor to pass through or come to Washington, where I hope to have an interview with you. Your obedient servant,

GEO. W. CRAWFORD,
Secretary of War.

Brevet Lt.-Col. GEO. A. McCALL,
Philadelphia.

[After a personal interview with the Secretary at Washington, the writer returned to Philadelphia for his *traps*, and on receipt of his written instructions, of which the following is an extract, immediately set out in obedience thereto.]

WAR DEPARTMENT, Washington, Nov. 18, 1849.

SIR:—As you are about to join your regiment now on duty in New Mexico, it has occurred to me as proper to make some observations on the peculiar condition of that and another territory of the United States.

. . . .

The Constitution of the United States and the late treaty with Mexico, guarantee their admission into the Union of our States, subject only to the judgment of Congress. Should the people of New Mexico wish to take any steps towards this object so important and necessary to themselves, it will be your duty, and the duty of others with whom you are associated, not to thwart but advance their wishes. It is their right to appear before Congress and ask for admission into the Union. Other and complicated questions may arise which are considered as merged in this essential right of these people, and for the decision of which we must look beyond the authority of the Executive, &c., &c., &c. . . . .

It will be instructive (and probably necessary information, when the people of New Mexico form a constitution and seek admission into the Confederacy of the States,) to have your observations and views on their probable numbers, habits, customs, and pursuits of life. I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
GEO. W. CRAWFORD, *Sec. of War.*

Brev. Lt.-Col. MCCALL, *Philadelphia, Pa.*

[At Mobile, on his way to New Orleans, the writer was quite ill, and was detained there several weeks. On arriving in the latter city, he took the first steamer for Matagorda Bay, where the military depots for the troops of Eastern Texas are established. Thence by land to San Antonio, where he arrived December 31st.]

San Antonio, January 10, 1850.

My dear M——: I wrote you twice from New Orleans, whence I sailed on the 19th ult. On the 23d I landed at Indian Point, Matagorda Bay, the Military Depot for this section of the frontier of Texas. Here I got from the Quartermaster a pair of mules for a light wagon, which I had brought over from New Orleans, and the next morning started for this place, a distance of one hundred and fifty-five miles. The road in part was heavy and the mules not very good, as the Quartermaster had two days before sent off a train of wagons with his best animals. As I had bought in New Orleans a fine Kentucky blooded horse, and as I purposed travelling chiefly in the saddle, I had in my wagon only my servant and luggage; but the Paymaster who was travelling with me had two wagons loaded with specie, and we could not make very well more than twenty or twenty-five miles a day. We were in consequence seven days on the road. We encamped at night by the road-side, and I slept generally very comfortably, although greatly reduced by illness.

On the way I killed a grouse and a very fine deer with my rifle, which furnished our mess. I scarcely ever saw fatter or more delicious venison. We had one Norther on the march, which lasted two days and a night, and coming after a day or two of warm weather, made us feel the keenness of its blast.

On arriving here on New Year's eve, I found General Brooke and General Garland, also General Harney who had come from Austin to pass the New Year's time; as well as many of my old associates.

The accounts of the grass on the prairies between here and El Paso, are not very favorable, and it was decided to mount the Dragoons for my escort on mules, as horses would scarcely be able to make the journey at this season. A good deal of delay has consequently taken place in getting together the mules, &c., for the expedition; but I am in hopes of getting off in a very few days. We are compelled to carry some corn, for there are portions of the route in which no grass at all can be expected at this season.

The distance to El Paso, as measured by the Odometer (an instrument attached to a carriage, which counts the revolutions of the wheels, and so measures with a good deal of accuracy the road travelled) carried by the Engineer party which went over with the Battalion of the 3d Regiment, is six hundred and seventy-three miles. From El Paso to Santa Fé, the estimate is three hundred and eighty; making in all from this station, one thousand and fifty-three miles.

As the days are short, and time must be allowed the mules to graze, it is not thought by the officers who have been over the road during the fall, and by the frontier men, that I can reach El Paso in less than thirty-five to forty days.

A merchant from the latter place has just come in; he left the pass on the tenth of November. He carried corn for his animals a good part of the route, yet he left many by the way.

I was disappointed in the appearance of the town of San Antonio; it is in a flat vale upon the borders of the river of the same name, which gushes from a swell of land (limestone) about seven miles distant, at once almost large enough to be dignified with the title of river. Several other large gushes of water near its course, in the distance of three miles, entitle it fairly to that distinction.

The houses are generally one-story, *adobe* (large sunburnt brick) structures in the Spanish, or rather degenerate

Spanish (Mexican) style of architecture; flat roofs and clay floors. The officers stationed here have difficulty in getting accommodations for their families; and have to put floors, &c., at their own expense. I have been living at a very good boarding-house, where the General was kind enough to secure me a seat at the table. The common hotels are bad enough.

Tell Blue that many inquiries have been made after his welfare, and many regrets that he did not come on. But the journey would have been a hard one for him. The horse I got in New Orleans has already proved his excellence, and I shall try hard to get him through alive.

On the 8th, a ball was given to the military by the towns-people, and was a very creditable affair. Some eighty or more ladies were present, principally Mexicans, (for this you know was an old Mexican settlement,) and some of them very pretty women. The supper was quite a stylish affair. I will not close my letter until I am about to put foot in stirrup, and strike into the almost boundless waste.

February 1, 1850.

Here I have been for a month, in daily expectation of setting out on my expedition; but a number of things I cannot enumerate have contributed, each in turn, to add to the detention. I am quite ashamed to think I have let so much time pass without writing or sending off my letter, but so it has been; every day I thought would enable me to say I am off at last. To-morrow morning I set out. Lieutenants Barton and Marshall of my Regiment (from West Point in July last) have just arrived, and go with me. I have been waiting for them for the last ten days.

Crossing of the Pecos River, 320 miles from San Antonio.
February 19, 1850.

My dear M——: I send back some men from this point, and by them this to inform you of my progress thus far. We have had some severe Northers and sudden changes of weather, but I have always been up at four o'clock in the morning, and in the saddle as soon as it was light enough to see the road. To-day has been pleasant, and favored our crossing the river, which is of swimming depth. To show you something of the climate in this mountain region, I refer to my Journal, and find on the 17th at 6 o'clock A. M., that is, as soon as it was light enough to count the degrees, at 28°, and at 2 P. M. at 76°; making a change of temperature of 48° in about eight hours. On the 8th inst., the thermometer stood at 6 A. M. at 20°, and at 3 P. M. at 73°; making a difference of 53° in nine hours. This morning at 6 A. M. the mercury was at 22°, and at this hour, 11 A. M., bids fair to reach the highest point attained.

We have had abundance of game hitherto, but now we go into a desolate mountain land, where I am told there is no game at all.

I could tell you many incidents of the march, but must defer it till I have more time. Everything is across the river, and I have ordered the men to saddle up, as I must go some miles to find a little grass. Therefore I have no time to say more. Affectionately, &c.

Santa Fe, March 12, 1850.

My dear M——: I arrived here last evening after sunset; having left San Antonio on the 2d of February. Altogether, I have had a very successful journey. Through Northers, snow-storms, and every imaginable change of weather; through the regular vicissitudes of the latitude and altitude; and through all the incalculable vagaries of a nondescript, heterogeneous climate,—through everything but a "wet Norther" I have come favored greatly. I have not lost a man, or a horse, or a mule. But I did not encounter a "wet Norther," I am thankful to say, or I might have lost half or all my mules, and have been compelled to close the tramp on foot. In a *wet Norther*, I am told by those who have experienced them, the mule appears to suddenly collapse, and that at the small of the back you may almost make your thumb and forefinger meet around the backbone of the animal. The sleet encases the mule entirely with a thin coat of ice; and if he lies down he never rises again,—nor will any means employed by his teamster induce him to make the effort to do so. Aubry, a dashing, gallant fellow who followed a few weeks after my party, told me he was caught by one at "Eagle Spring." He had a large train of merchandise, and among other things, several barrels of brandy and whisky. When the wet Norther came on he kept his train in motion until he reached the timber around the spring. Here the idea occurred to him that his mules might be saved by giving those who seemed to be most likely to succumb, as much whisky as they would take from a bucket set before them. He told me these mules took from a pint to a quart, and many of them that he had regarded as lost, recovered. He said that one mule continued to drink after he thought it had enough, and would not relinquish the bucket when he wished to take it away. He continued: "I was curious to see how much the beast would take, and I looked on with amazement till he emptied the bucket, which contained more than a gallon. Immediately after this he lay down and at once fell asleep; from that sleep he never awoke." Lieutenant Marcy, in October previous, on his return across the plains to Fort Smith, Arkansas, lost forty-five mules in one night, by one of these Northers.

The evening of my arrival, and within a few hours, I opened to some of the leading men the object of my mission, and enlisted them in the cause I desired to advance. I met with success in this matter also, and the matter met with the approval of the proper authorities at Washington. Adieu.

SANTA FE, May 13, 1850.

MY DEAR M——: We have had no news from the United States since the 15th of last month. High waters on the Arkansas River, or some of the numerous streams on the route, are supposed to be the cause of it.

I am getting very tired of Santa Fé. There is nothing in the town to interest or divert the mind: the country around has still less attraction; no beauty of scenery, no game, absolutely nothing but sand-hills and snow-covered mountains. The town is built at the foot of a range of steep mountains (on the east), and they have been covered with ice and snow ever since I have been here. We have had on an average, every third day, a hail-storm or a snow-storm, and in the intervals high and chilling winds. Last night, May 12th, there was a heavy fall of snow, and this morning it continued to fall till seven o'clock. On going out to breakfast, I found the cedars with their branches loaded down, looking like huge snow-balls.

The sun peeped out for an hour about noon; but at two o'clock P.M. we had quite a refreshing hail-storm, which lasted for an hour. To judge of the climate from what I have seen, I should say it could not be surpassed in its own peculiar style; but the level of the town is 7400 feet above that of the sea; and it is enclosed at a less or greater distance by mountains from 1500 to 3000 feet higher than itself; therefore, as we may suppose, the summers, about ten days before the middle of August, are by no means oppressive. Consequently, having accomplished the principal object for which I came, I have no objection to a change of quarters; and more especially as it is the very place of all others for neuralgia. The disease is indigenous: numbers are suffering more or less. I thought while I was in the more southern country, I was getting rid of the tormentor for good and all, but it has appeared again.

I write now by a gentleman, who with a party of about twenty men leaves here to-morrow, with the purpose of pushing on to Independence in twenty-five days. In the course of a week or more perhaps, our regular express will be dispatched, when I will write you again. Yours, &c.

SANTA FE, May 18, 1850.

MY DEAR M——: Yesterday and to-day have been the only summer-like days we have had this season; still the highest of the peaks, a few miles to the east of the town, are white with snow.

Mr. Aubry, a merchant of this place, who left San Antonio, Texas, on the 28th of February last, arrived here a fortnight since, with a wagon-train of goods. He was not so fortunate as myself in having fine weather. On the 26th March, at the "Eagle Spring," in the Apache Mountains, he was caught in a Norther or snow-storm, and of two hundred mules he lost forty-five during the night—frozen to death.

Wednesday, 22d.

On Monday morning, just as the express for the United States was about to start, we received from Las Vegas (the most eastern military post, seventy-five miles distant), information that the express party from the United States had been cut off by Indians at La Clara Spring, forty miles east of Vegas. The whole party, consisting of eleven, were killed, and the letters scattered to the winds. In this sad state things were found by Mr. Lee, who with a party of twenty-five citizens left here on the 13th, and by whom I wrote to you as I have already mentioned. The destruction of the party had occurred seven or eight days before he arrived on the ground, and as they judged from appearances, by a large body of Indians. Mr. Lee collected all the scattered letters to be found, and returned to Barclay's fort, a trading establishment, between the Spring and Vegas, where he intends waiting for an increase of his party. We got what was saved of the mail last night, and I had the pleasure to receive your two letters of the 3d and 9th of March. Adieu.

SANTA FE, June 11, 1850.

MY DEAR M——: Since I wrote you last we have had more pleasant weather, though the mountains all around have still much snow on their pointed summits. The climate here is extremely variable; we have a few delicious days, but many that are uncomfortable. This morning until twelve o'clock I had fire in my sitting-room. I have taken quarters with a Mexican family, one of the best in the city, that of Don Juan Sena. I have an anteroom, chamber, and servant's room communicating with each other all on the same floor, that is the ground floor, as there are no houses here of more than one story. I thought I would try the effect of Mexican diet on neuralgia; and I of course take at each meal a good dose of Chile Colorado and Ajo, but I do not dislike some of their dishes, though boiled and stewed meats, varied in different ways, constitute chiefly the courses. We begin to get some fresh vegetables; frejoles, however, are a standing dish, and I find them well cooked here. I breakfast alone; at dinner I have the company of Don Juan, and occasionally a friend. It is the Mexican custom for the ladies and gentlemen to eat separately; here I have never seen the latter at table. Yours, &c.

REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO, July 15, 1850.

SIR:—Since my arrival in New Mexico, having kept in view the instructions with which I was honored, contained in your letter of November 19, 1849, to wit: "It will be instructive and probably necessary information, when the people of New Mexico form a constitution and seek admission into the Confederacy of the States, to have your observations and views on their probable numbers, habits, customs, and pursuits of life;" and the people of New Mexico having formed and adopted a State constitution, and transmitted it to the Executive, to be laid before the Congress of the United States, I have now to submit, in compliance with your instructions, a few remarks, the result of much inquiry, and of such personal observation as could be made while in the regular discharge of military duties.

First. The population of New Mexico is, I am satisfied, less than it has been represented.

According to the statistics presented by Governor Martinez, at the division of the Department of New Mexico into districts, in the year 1844, the population, including the Pueblos or civilized Indians, amounted to one hundred thousand.

If at the period alluded to, the number of inhabitants was not overrated, which is more than probable, it has certainly since then diminished in a most unaccountable manner. I have taken pains to ascertain the number of Mexicans, residents of this Department, who at the time of its cession to the United States declared their adhesion to the republic of Mexico; and of these, how many afterwards withdrew their declaration and remained here, and how many actually left our territory; and of the latter, how many have since returned to make it their permanent home; and I am satisfied that the loss in numbers does not exceed one thousand, or, at the most, twelve hundred souls. In addition to those above mentioned, a few men of wealth, with their peons, have within the past year removed to *Guadalupe*, a settlement on the right bank of the Rio Grande, twenty-five miles below El Paso del Norte, where inducements have been held out by the Mexican government to bring over to their side the rich and better class of people. The numerical loss thus sustained is scarcely appreciable. In fact, there is no known cause that could have materially reduced the population of New Mexico within the last six years; yet from positive data, it is very clear that it does not now amount to the number above stated.

Where but little is known, and where, in seeking that little, conflicting statements are frequently encountered, it is no easy matter to arrive at the truth; therefore, I will not venture the assertion that the population of New Mexico, at the present time, greatly exceeds the quota required to give one seat in the House of Representatives of the United States; and, indeed, so great a portion of the face of the country is made up of rugged mountains and waste plains, that it cannot be expected soon, if ever, to receive and support a population in numbers and wealth at all proportioned to its extent of territory.

Besides the native Mexicans, the present population includes, of persons born in the United States and in Europe, who have become citizens of the State, at the extent twelve hundred. And of the natives, besides those whom strictly speaking we call Mexicans, there is another distinct and numerous class which seems to invite particular attention. I mean the Pueblo Indians.

Having embraced Christianity under the Spanish rule, the Pueblos were admitted to the rights of citizenship by the Mexican government under Iturbide; and these rights, which they have enjoyed to the present time, (at least in name,) are confirmed to them by the State constitution. Under this they are subject to taxation (by legislation) in common with other inhabitants. It is to be hoped, however, the legislature will, in its wisdom, adopt a mild and conciliatory policy towards these people. Under the present change of government, the impressions first made it will be difficult to remove from their minds; and dissatisfaction produced at the outset, may ultimately lead to more serious results than would at first glance appear. To explain this, it will be necessary to state in what way the Pueblos may be made an element of much good or evil to the State. These Indians still carry on an occasional traffic, and are careful to maintain a good understanding with the wild Indians. Not only, then, may their influence be used to advantage in controlling, and, indeed, in reclaiming, several of the least savage of these tribes; but if at any time the United States find it necessary to chastise an open declaration of hostilities by several of the border tribes,—a thing not impossible, when a decided effort to restrain their predatory habits comes to be made,—they will find valuable auxiliaries in the Pueblos, who count at least twenty-five hundred warriors. On the other hand, should the latter from any cause become dissatisfied, either from what they might conceive to be the oppressive bearing of a law of the State, or its maladministration by the petty authorities, (for they still look upon the Mexicans with distrust,) it would be easy for their parties at different points to unite with the enemy for marauds or for battle without fear of detection.

They have twenty towns or settlements, which contain at least two thousand four hundred families. These, at the moderate computation of four to each family, give a total of nine thousand six hundred souls; but they probably exceed ten thousand. Each town is a distinct community, having its *gubernador*, or chief, and council; and each community (as a corporation) owns the soil it cultivates. This, a grant from the Spanish crown, is embraced within a circle whose radius is a league—the town its centre. The Pueblos are intelligent, moral, sober, and industrious; and, generally speaking, they are better off than the lower class of Mexicans. Many of them in each town speak the Spanish intelligibly, and some of the principal men read and even write the language as far as is required in their simple business transactions.

The "habits and customs" of the Mexican portion of the inhabitants do not differ materially from those of Mexicans elsewhere; yet, in some particulars, changes, the effect of intercourse with our people, have already begun to show themselves. An impression has been made, and perhaps the first step towards better things has already been accomplished. Here, in Santa Fé, the diminution of filth in the streets, and the improved dress and personal cleanliness of the people, together with the cloaking of immorality, show that precept and example are not altogether thrown away upon them.

The number who are of Spanish blood, unmixed, is small: in the mass, that of the Indian predominates,—so in the mass the character and disposition of the latter are to a greater or less degree inherited. This is evinced in more than one trait; but it is sufficient to cite their extreme aversion to continued labor. If a Mexican has not inextricably involved himself as the debtor of his employer, and, through the action of the law (Mexican) against debtors, become a peon for life, it is with difficulty he can be kept at work longer than is requisite to earn a few dollars; and while this lasts, he indulges to the full the luxury of lounging away the hours of the day with his *cigarito*, and perhaps the evening in the more exciting amusements of the fandango and the monte-table; nor does he resume his task until compelled by want. Being moderate in his appetites, he requires but little to subsist on, and therefore is constrained to labor but little.

The lower class are as ignorant as idle; and even among their superiors education is wofully neglected. From this it may be inferred that no great improvement in the moral condition of the present generation can be expected from the introduction of our institutions, which they can neither understand nor appreciate. It is to the coming generation we must look for this; and therefore the introduction of primary schools at as early a day as practicable, is a consideration of much interest.

Of their "pursuits of life," their manufactures, perhaps, stand lowest on the scale; they are certainly primitive in their character. Yet this is not so much to be attributed to a deficiency of aptness and manual skill or dexterity, as to the want of proper instruction and better models, with more continued and systematic application. Gradual improvement in this branch may, therefore, be looked for, if their natural indolence can be overcome, or their love of gain be stimulated through the influence of our own enterprising countrymen. The establishment of manufactories would do much to accomplish both, and, by fixing the price of labor at a fair rate, would probably prove to be the greatest lever that could be used in overturning the present system of *peonage*.

The cheapness of wool (which in time will be improved in quality, as well as reduced in price) will *at once* lead to the erection of factories for making carpets, blankets, and the coarser cloths; and they will not only supply the wants of the State itself, but to some extent the adjoining departments of Mexico. These fabrics will likewise eventually become important articles of traffic with the large tribes of mountain and prairie Indians. The coarse woollens, if with the exception of the head workmen, Mexican operatives can be used, may be afforded here at prices to preclude competition; for, independently of the cost of transportation, the price of wool and the price of labor are here from one-third to one-half less than in the United States.

To a moderate extent *iron works* may also be profitably established. Iron is abundant and of fair quality, as is the coal, which is more or less bituminous, and will answer to reduce the ore. The heavy cost of transportation from the United States will, it is probable, soon call attention to this subject.

At present but little attention is paid to *mining*, for two reasons,—a want of capital, if not a want of enterprise among the people,—and an inherent fear of "*los Indios.*" There is, however, reason to believe that the mines may hereafter become the principal source of wealth to the State. The mines of New Mexico have always been represented as rich in gold, and immensely productive to the Spaniards, until repeated incursions of hostile Indians caused them to be abandoned. The localities of these mines are at this time for the greater part unknown; the wild tribes who inhabit the supposed gold regions having prevented their exploration. And for the same reason, under present circumstances, their exploration is beyond the reach of private enterprise. Nothing, therefore, can be satisfactorily known of the richness or poverty of the State in this respect, until its vast mountain regions are thoroughly and scientifically explored. With this view, it would be well if a topographical engineer were associated with an able, practical geologist, in order that the Government might receive full reports, with accurate maps, both geographical and geological, of the whole country. For this purpose there would be required a military escort of sufficient strength to enable the party to push its examinations to the most remote parts of the State, now the constant haunts of Indians.

Formerly, of the profitable pursuits of New Mexico, "*stock-raising*" stood high upon the list, and although now sadly reduced by the continued inroads of the Navajoes and Apaches, it will again, when protected from their marauds, yield large profits to the proprietors. There are in New Mexico grazing lands of great extent, where countless flocks and herds may be reared at a very trifling expense. They require neither stabling nor forage during the winter; the nutritious "*gramma*," a species of grass found on the mountain-sides and the adjoining uplands, affording abundant sustenance during that season. The climate, too, is well adapted to all kinds of stock, particularly sheep, which, owing to the dryness of the atmosphere, are almost exempt from "*rot*," and other diseases common to low countries. Some twenty or five-and-twenty years ago, before the hand of the red man had fallen so heavily upon them, the people of this State, as well as Chihuahua, sent annually to the city of Mexico vast numbers of sheep,* as well as cattle and mules. At this day not one thousand are sent from districts that formerly furnished their hundreds of thousands, such has been the rapacity and the relentless spirit of hostility of the Navajoes and Apaches.

The hill-sides and the plains, that were in days past covered with sheep and cattle, are now bare in many parts of the State; yet the work of plunder still goes on. The predatory operations of the two tribes just mentioned are even now carried on in the close vicinity of our military posts; the shepherds are pounced upon and shot with arrows to prevent their carrying information, and with their spoil the Indians dash at speed to the mountains, and are beyond reach before the loss is known. In this way they (I mean now the Apaches only) run the flocks from seventy to one hundred miles in twenty-four hours. And, consequently, out of ten thousand sheep that may be started, probably not more than one thousand will reach their destination. As the over-driven animals faulter from exhaustion, those that do not fall dead by the wayside are lanced, as the Indians pass, to prevent their falling again into the hands of the Mexicans. Thus the destruction is usually tenfold the gain of the Indians. The Apache is satisfied with that, because all his care is to supply his present wants. The more provident Navajo is more careful, because his principal object is to increase his stock at home. Within no more than three months past, between fifteen and twenty thousand sheep and several hundred head of cattle and mules have been driven from the Rio Grande, above Socorro, and from the vicinity of Vegas, and several shepherds killed, with entire impunity, by the two tribes already named.* They were on several occasions pursued by the troops, but without success.

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* The Chavez connection, consisting of three or four families, residing below Albuquerque, are known to have sent as many as two hundred thousand sheep to the city in one year.

It is only necessary to free the mountains bounding the valley of the Rio Grande from the incursions of these Indians, in order to increase again in a few years the stock to its former numbers; then wool of improved quality, besides supplying the home consumption, would be sent to Missouri, and bring large returns; and horned cattle, mules, &c., raised at little or no expense, would secure large profits at the same market.

I place agriculture last, or as the least productive of wealth of the three principal industrial pursuits of New Mexico, viz., mining, stock-raising, and agriculture; but I do so rather in reference to the past history and the future prospects of the State than its present circumstances. Formerly, under the Spanish government, *mines* were the most productive of wealth; towards the close of that era, and during the early period of the independence of Mexico, the immense droves of horses and mules, the herds and flocks which covered the face of the country, constituted the chief riches of this department. Of both these, in succession, the inhabitants of New Mexico have been despoiled by their more warlike borderers, and therefore at this day their soil is almost all that remains to them. Its produce, through sufferance of the Indians,* has saved them from starvation during the infliction of a twofold scourge; but it has not, nor will it ever make them rich: such is the history of the past and the present.

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* Since the above was written, an official report has been received that a flock of sixteen thousand had been carried off from Puerco, opposite Cibolletta.

The future of New Mexico, it is to be hoped, will disclose another picture: the Indians subdued; the hill-sides white with flocks; and the neglected mines again yielding up their hoards of the precious metals; and *then* the cultivation of the soil, although I believe it will always supply the wants of the inhabitants, will be productive of less wealth to the State than either of the other pursuits; because, were its products ten times what they ever can be, the isolated position of the State, and its entire want of the common requisite facilities of transportation, either by water communication or otherwise, would render the products of agriculture, in whatever excess above the home consumption, unavailable for exportation. And here it may not be inappropriate to give the opinion of many persons here with whom I have conversed respecting the navigableness of the Rio Grande. Although no accurate knowledge is professed to have been derived from close examinations of the great bend of the Jornada, yet its course has, with extreme difficulty, been followed throughout, over steep mountains and rugged cliffs that overhang the water; and judging from the appearance of the river in its rapid and irregular descent through this pass, a distance of near one hundred and fifty miles, the opinion entertained was very decided that loaded boats would not be able to make the passage in safety even at the highest stage of water; at low water it would be perfectly impracticable. And above the Jornada, it will be borne in mind, lie more than three-fourths of the arable land of the river, or at least nine-tenths of that of the State at large.

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* The Navajoes said, on a recent occasion, that their only reason for not exterminating the New Mexicans long ago was, that it was their interest to keep them as their shepherds.

In future, as heretofore, it is probable that to the narrow valley of the Rio-Grande (the "*river* bottom") will be confined the greater part of the strictly agricultural portion of the State. The affluents of the great river, the Pecos on the east, and the Puerco on the west, have along their courses large tracts of good land, but the want of timber on the first, and the too frequent occurrence of a partial or total want of water on the last, are serious hindrances to their improvement.

There are spots on each, where, but for the danger to be encountered from Indians, isolated settlements might be made to advantage; but these would add but little to the total amount.

The best lands on the Rio Grande are between Piña Blanca and the Jornada del Muerto—in a narrow strip on either bank of the river, that would measure, following its meanders, about one hundred and eighty miles. These lands—the bottom lands—vary in depth from one-half of a mile to two miles and a half, but probably do not exceed on an average one mile.

The soil is light, but where within reach of irrigation is enriched by the fertilizing waters of the river, and produces abundant and almost unfailing crops of wheat, corn, beans, and onions.

The uplands, even on the very borders of the river, and although the soil be good, are unproductive, for the reason that irrigation is impracticable in the ordinary way. If, by *boring*, water in sufficient quantity for irrigation could be got, many large tracts of uplands, now worthless except for grazing, would possibly become as productive as the bottoms; but this in both respects is problematical.

At points where bodies of this land are found sufficiently large to warrant the expense, another mode more eligible may be adopted. The fall of the river in its passage through this part of the State being about two and a-half feet to the mile, the distance it may be necessary to bring the water from above is easily calculated; thus, a large "acéquia" or canal, opened five or eight miles above, would throw its branches in every direction over land from twelve to twenty feet above the level of the river, at the point cultivated.

On the march from El Paso del Norte to Santa Fé the river lands were carefully noted, and a rough estimate made of the amount at present in cultivation, &c., &c.: it is given here, and may be regarded as an approximation.

On the left or east bank of the river, on the line above indicated, from El Paso to Don' Aña, there is but little land under cultivation, say thirty-two hundred acres, and as much more cultivable still vacant, while there is along the river-bank at least forty-five thousand acres worthless for agricultural purposes.

Twelve miles above Don' Aña commences the noted Jornada, crossing the high table-land that fills the great western bend of the river—a stretch of ninety miles without water. At a point twenty-five miles from the north end of the Jornada, by taking a trail, (impracticable for wagons,) is found at the distance of six miles westward the *Ojo del Muerto*, or Dead Man's Spring, where there is running water; but the fatigue of the animals occasioned by this extra march of twelve miles is not compensated by the draught of water; and most trains, unless they can command time to lie by here, push on to the end of the journey without halting. During the rainy season two or three pools may be found, containing perhaps water enough for two hundred and fifty or three hundred animals—not more; and this may not last three weeks after the rain ceases.

Around this bend impassable mountains close in upon the river-banks as far as Fray Cristobal, eighteen miles below Valverde; and from Don' Aña to Lopez, a distance of one hundred and forty miles, there is not a human habitation; that of Valverde having been abandoned many years since in consequence of overflow.

From the north end of Jornada to Piña Blanca there is at present under cultivation about sixty miles of bottom-land, with an average depth of one mile, giving sixty square miles, or thirty-eight thousand four hundred acres; of cultivable land unimproved about fifty square miles, or thirty-two thousand acres; and of land uncultivable—the greater part entirely sterile—about seventy square miles, or forty-four thousand eight hundred acres.

The different qualities of land (it will be understood) are in greater or less bodies interposed amongst each other along the whole line, though the best lands, and in the largest bodies, lie between Lopez and Algodones.

On the right or west bank of the river, following its meanders, there may be from El Paso to Piña Blanca about forty-seven square miles, or thirty thousand two hundred and eighty acres, now under cultivation; of good land vacant, one hundred and eighty miles, or one hundred and fifteen thousand two hundred acres; and of land waste, and fit only for grazing, two hundred and three square miles, or one hundred and thirty thousand acres.

Here also, on the right bank of the river, the good, bad, and indifferent lands are intermixed in tracts of various sizes along the route.

In addition to the foregoing there are, in isolated tracts, many considerable bodies of arable land, the principal of which are here enumerated.

First, the beautiful valley of Taos, begirt almost by the Rocky Mountains, their spurs and other detached peaks. The valley may be from twenty-five to thirty miles in circumference, and may contain, immediately on the margins of the several streams that unite near the town of (San Fernandez de) Taos, forming the Rio de Taos, and thence to its debouch into the Rio Grande, about fifteen thousand acres now in cultivation, and ten thousand acres arable vacant. The remainder, though the soil is generally good, lies too high for irrigation in the ordinary way, even supposing that the streams afforded water enough, which is doubtful.

Passing from the valley over a spur of the Rocky Mountains there is from La Joya to Cañada a stretch along the Rio Grande of about fifteen miles, with an average depth of two miles, say twenty thousand acres of good cultivable land, little of which is improved.

Crossing the Rio Grande at Cañada, we ascend the Rio Chamas to the town of Abiquiu, adjoining which the river-bottom is cultivated for about three miles, with an average width of one and a half, or twenty-eight hundred and eighty acres. The unimproved lands on this stream, equally good in quality and position, amount to thrice that quantity; in this estimate both banks of the river are included.

Recrossing the Rio Grande, there will be found, at Rayado and Morotown, some twenty thousand acres of good land, about one-tenth of which is improved; at the former a portion of the land lies high, but may be irrigated by bringing the water some miles.

Around Las Vegas, Upper and Lower Tecoleté and Barclay's Trading-house, there may be one hundred thousand acres, of which nearly one-fifth is improved.

On the Pecos River, at the towns of Pecos, San José, San Miguel, Anton Chico, &c., probably six thousand acres in cultivation, and thrice that amount of arable land vacant.

Of several of the last-named bodies of land it should be remarked that doubt exists whether the streams on which they lie will afford a sufficiency to irrigate the whole of what is actually within reach of their waters.

Returning westward, we have on the Rio de Santa Fé, below the town, not more than five thousand acres in cultivation: all that around still vacant is worthless for agricultural purposes. And from Cañada to Peña Blanca, along the river, there is but little good land on this side. The lands on the Pecos, as far as yet settled, are included in the above estimates. Below the settlements there is timber at but two points. These are the *Bosque Redondo*, or round forest, and the *Bosque Grande*, or great forest. The latter, in or about the parallel of Valverde, extends along the river for fifteen miles, with a breadth of eight or ten miles, including both banks. Sixty miles above is the former, lying equally on both banks, with a diameter of ten miles. Each has good timber in abundance, but it is impossible to say what quantity of land adjoining either is fit for the plough; and they are the only points on the Pecos below the Anton Chico settlement where wood enough even for fuel is found.

The Puerco and its west tributary, the Rio San José, the Rio de Jemez, and the country thence along the Rio Grande to the mouth of the Rio Chamas, have some small tracts of land in cultivation, principally by Pueblos. I have been unable to ascertain the amount from any reliable source, and therefore have not included it in the estimate. But it is believed, as mentioned above, that the frequent sinking of the Puerco in deep sands, under which, upon a hard clay, it follows its course for miles, reappearing at intervals in the form of pools, until finally lost entirely before reaching the Rio Grande, will prevent its ever adding much to the agricultural produce of the State.

On the headwaters of the Arkansas, I have been told by old trappers, there is a beautiful country of great extent, where the land, well watered and well timbered, is sufficiently level for farming. They expressed the belief that good crops of wheat and corn might be raised here without irrigation, the rains being seasonable and sufficient.

More minute examination of this country will be necessary to determine its character and value.

I shall now proceed to recapitulate and sum up what may be considered the agricultural districts of New Mexico; not including any portion of the State now held by wild Indians.

	Land now in cultivation. Acres.	Land cultivable now vacant. Acres.
Left or east bank of Rio Grande:		
From El Paso to Don Aña	3,200	3,200
From Fray Cristobal to Peña Blanca . .	38,600	32,000
Right or west bank of Rio Grande:		
From El Paso to Peña Blanca . . .	30,280	115,200
Valley of Taos	15,000	10,000
On Rio Grande:		
From La Joya to Cañada	2,000	18,000
Valley of Chamas:		
At Abiquiu	2,880	8,840
Rayado and Morotown	2,000	18,000
Las Vegas, Upper and Lower Tecoleté and Barclay's Trading-house	20,000	80,000
Pecos, San José, San Miguel, and Anton Chico	6,000	18,000
Santa Fé	5,000	
Total number of acres	124,760	303,240

From the foregoing statement, based upon close personal observations and much minute inquiry, it would appear that more than one half of the arable land, either improved or vacant, as far as now known with any degree of certainty, lies in the immediate valley of the Rio Grande.

The method adopted in estimating, it is true, is rude, but neither time nor opportunity admitted of a more regular and satisfactory examination. The figures, I may assert with confidence, are not too high; nor do I believe they will be found very greatly below the truth with respect to the lands specified; what amount of farming lands there may be in addition to these, further examination will determine.

In looking at the past, in the history of New Mexico, it is clear that the fruits of labor in the principal pursuits of life above mentioned, have, up to the time of the cession of the territory to the United States, been blighted by the presence of formidable tribes of Indians, who *still* infest the country; and it would from certain indications appear that the future prosperity of the State to arise from the steady, uninterrupted prosecution of these pursuits, will in a great measure depend on the impression *now* to be made on these Indians.

It may be apprehended, that, if they are not in the beginning impressed with the ability and the settled purpose of the United States to chastise those who plunder and murder its citizens,—if acts of this kind, now of almost monthly occurrence and utterly beyond the power of the present military force to check, are continued longer unpunished, the Indians will hold us in the contempt with which they now look upon the Mexicans, whom they have wantonly robbed and murdered for two centuries past. And the inevitable consequence will be, sooner or later, a *war*, more or less general, with the surrounding tribes.

This subject appears to be so closely blended with those to which my attention has been directed, I trust a few remarks on the *present strength and temper* of these Indians may not be unacceptable to the Department. The information has been gathered piecemeal, and therefore may be regarded as the collective knowledge of several persons who have seen much of the different tribes.

Of the eight tribes of wild Indians who inhabit the mountains and plains of New Mexico and the contiguous country, the Navajoes and Apaches are the most formidable as enemies, the most troublesome as neighbors.

The first are, with the exception of the Moqui, the most civilized: they are without exception the most wealthy of all. They are not so warlike nor so bold in attack as the Apaches, but they are numerous, well equipped, and occupy a country well fortified by nature. Their country, extending from the San Juan to the Gila, with a breadth of 150 miles, consists chiefly of mountains and high tablelands, and is full of fastnesses. Their possessions consist of large stocks of horses, mules, horned cattle, and sheep, which are perhaps extravagantly represented, by persons who have had intercourse with them, as numerous beyond calculation,—many times more so than those of all New Mexico at present. There may be great extravagance in all this, but it is well known that these Indians do possess stock, more or less. If such be the case, and they are supposed to have retained one out of ten, or even one out of every twenty, of the countless flocks and herds they have driven off from the Rio Grande within the last twenty years, to increase their own stock, their progeny would in less time have swelled the amount to extravagant numbers. Although they have no permanent villages, they cultivate the soil to a considerable extent, making periodical visits to their fields at planting and harvest times. In this way they make a sufficiency of grain for all their wants, besides a few vegetables and fruits. They are said to be intelligent and industrious, and their manufactures (blankets and coarse cloths,) in their neatness and finish, go far to prove this; these articles being made (of wool of their own growing) not only for their own use, but for traffic also to a large amount.

For some years past they are believed to have steadily increased in numbers, and to count now about eighteen hundred lodges, which, at six per lodge, would give ten thousand eight hundred souls.

From the aptness of these Indians and the advancement they have made in the arts of civilization, it occurs to the mind that they might with proper management be induced to settle themselves permanently, as the Pueblos have done; after which they might be advantageously employed in an attempt to reclaim their more wild and savage neighbors. And the accomplishment of an object so important would seem worthy of notice.

The forays which the Apaches make upon the Mexicans are incited by want; they have nothing of their own, and must plunder or starve. This is not the case with the Navajoes—*they* have enriched themselves by appropriating the flocks and herds of an unresisting people, and cannot offer the plea of necessity.

In the first place, before anything can be done with this people, it is believed it will be indispensable to open the communication with them in their own country, in the presence of a sufficient military force to impress them seriously with the weight and importance of the conference; that the object is not an idle "*talk*,"—a treaty such as they have been in the habit from year to year of making with the New Mexicans, to be continued in force only until their own immediate objects are quietly attained,—but a treaty, the violation of which will bring upon them war in all its severity. Then (the treaty being concluded) let the first offence be so punished as to prove that we are in earnest. Forbearance exercised towards the Navajoes would be mistaken humanity; and the blood of our own citizens would be the fruits of it. It would be dealing with them too much in the style they have been accustomed to; and the only effect would be to excite their contempt for us.

But I am satisfied that the presence of a strong military force in their country—(the Navajoes muster over two thousand warriors)—would insure the observance of any treaty it might be important to make with them. Their thievish propensities could then be controlled; and they might in a short time, by judicious management, be induced to give up their roving habits and settle themselves in permanent towns, in the vicinity of their fields. They could, with little labor, live well on the increase of their flocks, and the bountiful product of their soil, which, with little attention, gives growth to noble crops of wheat, as well as corn. Nor would the change of life to them be very great.

If the Navajoes are first secured, and their chiefs enlisted in our cause, their influence may at once be brought to bear upon the other tribes. They entertain the most friendly relations with their northern neighbors, the Utahs; as do the latter with the tribe adjoining on the east, the Jicarilla Apaches: and by the last the communication is kept up with the several bands of their own tribes on the east of the State, and so on to the Gila bands on the south. And here, if the Gila Apaches prove refractory, the Navajoes may be brought against them without difficulty, for they are far from friendly now, and frequently have a brush when they meet.

To an end so desirable, the Pueblos of the State might in the first place be well employed in bringing about the reformation of the Navajoes; although at present they are not friendly.

The Moqui Indians, who live to the southwest of the Navajoes, are weak in numbers, and are too remote to give annoyance to the State, were they so disposed. They have, however, no such disposition; but on the contrary, are pacific, honest, and hospitable; and are, besides, the most civilized of the western Indians. They always proved themselves good warriors in their former contests with the Navajoes and Apaches; and though much reduced in numbers by their more powerful enemies, were never subdued.

The cultivation of a friendly understanding with them might be repaid at some future day, by their services in various ways, as guides, &c., in the event of a war with either of their old enemies. The Moqui live in permanent villages; cultivate large farms; have a large amount of stock; and make blankets and cloths from wool of their own growing. The number of their lodges is about three hundred and fifty, which, at seven per lodge, would give a population of twenty-four hundred and fifty souls.

On the north of the Navajoes are the Utahs, occupying the territory between the San Juan and the head of the Arkansas—a rugged country, but well stocked with game. They have neither permanent villages nor cultivated fields, and subsist chiefly on game. They are a warlike people, and much attached to a wandering life, frequently extending their excursions to California. Altogether, they amount to four or five thousand, though there are rarely at a time more than one thousand immediately on the borders of the State. These people do not extend their forays further south than Abiquiu, Taos, and Morotown; and in these they are very often united with the Jicarilla Apaches. In event of an active campaign being set on foot for the purpose of punishing the outrages committed recently by the latter, the Utahs would undoubtedly render them great assistance, covertly, and at the same time send in to inform us of their determination to remain neutral. It is not probable, however, they would openly join them.

Adjoining the Utahs on the northeast are the Cheyennes and Arrapahoes, who range from the headwaters of the Arkansas eastward upon the plains. They subsist entirely upon the buffalo; commit no depredations; are friendly to the white man—though in the event of a war with other tribes, could not perhaps be depended upon. Together, they amount to about three thousand five hundred souls.

The eastern part of New Mexico (up to the Rio Pecos) is a part of the range of the Comanches, and they visit these grounds at least once a year, generally after the breaking up of their winter-quarters near the sources of the Brazos and Trinity rivers of Texas. They rarely commit depredations in New Mexico; and their movements are principally of interest to the State, from their intimate connection with the Apaches. They meet the latter on the Pecos, and there concert their campaigns into Chihuahua and Sonora. From these departments they annually bring off large numbers of mules; and often from Durango, into the centre of which they sometimes make their way in company with the Mescaleros, (Apaches.) And from these departments they also bring off many prisoners.

Again, on their return, they halt at the Pecos, and are now met by the New Mexican traders. Their mules are many of them exchanged with the latter for arms and ammunition, cloths, and paint, &c., &c.; the remainder are driven with them on their return, and their meat eaten until they again enter the buffalo range.

Their prisoners are said to amount to large numbers; they consist principally of women and children, though men also are often brought over. A New Mexican, living at San Miguel, recently returned from a large camp of Comanches and Apaches, on the Pecos, stated that in the camp of the former there were almost as many Mexican slaves—women and children—as Indians. It will be a difficult matter to induce them to restore these prisoners. And until this unlicensed trade is broken up, their predatory incursions into Mexico can never be checked.

The Comanches, divided into three bands, have in all upwards of twelve thousand souls.

The *Kayuguas*, who occupy the country west of the Brazos, are rarely seen on the borders of New Mexico. They do not exceed two thousand souls.

Lastly, the several bands of the *Apaches*. These Indians, owing to their numerical strength, their bold and independent character, and their immemorial predatory habits, will, it is to be apprehended, prove more difficult to reclaim or subdue than any other of the (strictly speaking) New Mexican tribes.

From the earliest accounts we have of them, they have been regarded by their kindred tribes as *mountain robbers*. On the Gila, at the period of the Spanish conquest, they were in the habit of despoiling the fields of their more industrious and pacific neighbors, the Moqui. By these they have latterly been successfully resisted. But the inhabitants of Chihuahua and Sonora are still groaning under their relentless spoliations. They complain bitterly; but continue to submit without resistance.

The Apaches, divided into six bands, inhabit the country enclosed between the eastern chain of the Rio Grande mountains and the river Pecos, from the northern to the southern boundary of New Mexico, and on the south the country bordering on the Gila River,—thus completing the chain by uniting with the Utahs on the north, and with the territory of the Navajoes on the west.

Of the different bands, the *Jicarilla* Apaches, on the extreme north, are one of the smallest, but at the same time one of the most troublesome of the tribe. They have latterly committed more murders on our people than all the others together. Ranging from the upper Arkansas to the Canadian, their trail crosses the Independence and Santa Fé road between the "Point of Rocks" and the "Wagon Mound" or Santa Clara Spring, and this ground is known as the scene of several recent and deplorable tragedies. They have suffered severely in two or three conflicts with our troops during the past year, and are supposed now to number less than one hundred warriors —four hundred souls. They (as well as all the other bands of this tribe) have no permanent villages—no fields of grain; and fearing collision with the stronger tribes that roam the buffalo plains, the Jicarillas depend for their subsistence chiefly on the success of their marauding parties.

This band is considered as incorrigible, and it is believed they will continue to rob and murder our citizens until they are exterminated. I know of no means that could be employed to reclaim them.

Next in succession, southwardly, are the *White Mountain Apaches*, numbering one hundred and fifty warriors; they are in close communication with the *Sacramento Apaches*, who have about the same number of warriors. These two bands inhabit the White and Sacramento Mountains, and together they range the country extending north and south from the junction of the Gallinos with the Pecos to the lower end of the Jornada del Muerto. They continue to drive off the stock and to kill the Mexican shepherds both in the vicinity of Vegas and along the Rio Grande from Sandival's to Don' Aña.

Next come the *Apaches Mescaleros*, consisting of two bands, under the chiefs Marco and Gomez; the former (the more northerly) having two hundred warriors; the latter, four hundred. They hold the country east of the Rio Grande from the Guadalupe Mountains to Presidio del Norte.

These two bands are the strongest and the most warlike and fearless of their tribe. They have rarely molested the inhabitants of New Mexico north of El Paso; nor were they unfriendly to United States citizens whom they met on the road, until a feeling of hostility was aroused by the infamous attack of Glanton, an American citizen in the pay of the government of Chihuahua, on a part of Gomez's band in 1849. They have however, for years, in conjunction with the Comanches, committed fearful havoc in Chihuahua and Sonora, and like them have carried off women and children, though not by any means to the same extent.

These bands have no manufactures whatever; and having no agriculture and but little game in their own country, they subsist in a great measure on the meat of horses, mules, and sometimes cattle, driven from Mexico by their foraging parties. They are not, however, altogether without a farinaceous food. A kind of cake or paste is made from the mezquite bean, and the root of the maguay plant is roasted and eaten.

The *Gila Apaches*, subdivided into three or four smaller bands, make their home—if an Apache can be said to have a home—on the Gila River.

Their foraging parties sometimes make their appearance on the Rio Grande, near Don' Aña; but by far the greater portion of their supplies are brought from Chihuahua. They are bold and independent, and together muster about four hundred warriors.

To take into view the different bands collectively as a tribe, and the extent of country held by the tribe; to consider their restless habits, their aversion to permanent villages and the labor of agriculture; at the same time bearing in mind the scarcity of game throughout a great part of their country, and therefore the temptation, in fact the almost necessity, to poach upon their neighbors, it would seem like the undertaking of a tedious task to attempt to reclaim the Apaches. It is true, it will require time to subdue their propensity to plunder, to control their movements, to settle them in permanent villages, and to induce them to commence the cultivation of the soil; and until this is effected, they must continue to plunder, or they must starve; still, it may be possible to accomplish all this, by judicious management, in a few years' time. During at least the early part of this period it would, of course, be necessary to feed these Indians; to give them cattle and sheep, and to encourage the rearing of them; to employ suitable persons—New Mexicans would be the best, as the Apaches understand their language—to teach them how to prepare their fields and plant their corn for the first year or two: and the greatest difficulty, perhaps, would be found, in carrying out this part of the scheme, to overcome the pride of the Apache warriors, who think any pursuits but those of war and the chase beneath their dignity.

From the following little incident may be drawn very fair conclusions as to the present condition and temper of the Apaches.

In March last Mr. F. X. Aubrey, on his way from San Antonio to El Paso with a train of wagons, fell in with *Marco's band* near the Limpia River. The former had with him near sixty men, which perhaps had some influence on the character of his reception. An amicable meeting, however, took place, and some mules were obtained from the Indians.

In the "talk" held between the parties, Mr. Aubrey told Marco that the United States desired to be on friendly terms with him; and that, consequently, he must not allow his people to kill our citizens, or carry off their stock. This he promised to do. He was then told he must also give up plundering the Mexicans. After a long pause he replied: "I had supposed that my brother was a man of good sense. Has he, then, seen between the Pecos and the Limpia game enough to feed 3000 people? We have had for a long time no other food than the meat of Mexican cattle and mules, and we must make use of it still, or perish." He said subsequently: "If your people will give us cattle to feed our families, we will no longer take from the Mexicans."

If these people were maintained in idleness, they would, perhaps, remain quiet; but whether they could be induced to take upon themselves the task of providing for their future subsistence, by their own manual labor, is a question that nothing but actual experiment will solve.

The whole of the Indians of the country are ignorant of the power of the United States, and also of its views as regards themselves. And it would do much to enlighten them as to the policy of our government if delegations from the Pueblos and the principal wild tribes were called to the United States. A journey through the States, and a visit to our principal cities, would likewise impress them as to the means and resources of the country to carry on a war. If, however, by such means as have been referred to, these people may not be reclaimed, it is very certain that a considerable augmentation of the armed force will be required to control them.

Within the last hour, information of a perfectly reliable character has been received that near Padillas, about seventy miles south of Santa Fé, seven thousand sheep were driven off by Navajoes a few days since; and a few miles lower on the river, six hundred; the shepherd of the last flock being pierced with fourteen arrows.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

GEO. A. MCCALL,

Major 3d Infantry, Brevet Lieut.-Colonel.

HON. GEO. W. CRAWFORD, *Secretary of War.*

[Copies of the State Constitution, in the Spanish and the English language, enclosed herewith.]

P.S.—The returns in the office of the Secretary of the Territory show the following number of votes polled at the recent elections. No estimate of the population can be made from them, as the number entitled to vote, who *did not* vote, is unknown.

Number of votes polled for the Constitution	3,371
Number of votes polled against the Constitution	39
	3,410

For Governor—Connelly	4,604	votes.
Baca	2,706	"
	7,310	"

For Lieutenant Governor—Alvarez	4,586	votes.
St. Vrain	3,465	"
	8,051	"

N. B.—The following is believed to be a pretty accurate estimate of the strength of the Apaches, and also of the other New Mexican Indians. I am aware that the Apaches and Utahs are by some persons set down as above 10,000 each; of the Pueblos at from 12,000 to 15,000; but I feel confident they have been overrated:

	Warriors.	Souls.
Apaches—Jicarillas	100	400
White Mountains	150	600
Sacramento Mountains	150	600
Mercaleros—		
Marco's band, 200 warriors, 1000 souls Gomez's band, 400 warriors, 1800 souls	600	2,800
Gila band—three or four subdivisions	400	1,600
Total of Apaches	1,400	6,000

Wild Indians of New Mexico.

		Lodges.	Souls.
West of Rio Grande:	1. Navajoes	1,500	10,000
	2. Moqui	350	2,500
North of the State:	3. Utah, on the State line	—	1,000
	far West	—	4,000
	4. Cheyennes	300	2,000
	5. Arrapahoes	300	1,500
East of Pecos:	6. Comanches	2,500	12.000
	7. Hayaguias	400	2,000
West of Pecos, and south of the State:	8. Apaches, warriors 1,400		6,000
Grand total			41,000
Not including W. Utahs			37,500

GEO. A. MCCALL.

[On the 20th of August, the following letter was received from Colonel Bliss, President Taylor's Private Secretary.]

COLONEL GEORGE A. McCALL, WASHINGTON, June 4, 1850.
Santa Fé.

DEAR COLONEL:—I am glad to learn that you have reached Santa Fé, and as I hear with improved health. I avail myself of the departure of Mr. Collins, who leaves to-morrow or this evening for New Mexico, to say that the President yesterday nominated you for the office of Inspector-General, *vice* Duncan. It gives me sincere pleasure to make this announcement; the next mail, I cannot doubt, *will carry* the news of your confirmation. I have nothing to say more.

Yours, very truly,
W. W. S. BLISS.

SANTA FE, August 29, 1850.

MY DEAR M——: I received by yesterday's mail my commission of Inspector-General, dated 11th June, having been confirmed by the Senate on the 10th. It was the more satisfactory and the more valuable to me, and I shall ever regard it with pride, because of its bearing the signature of General Taylor. It was not long before his death that he signed it, and it must have been a few days after the receipt of my first report from New Mexico, on a subject of interest to himself and his administration, and which I feel well assured was satisfactory to him. He had designated me long before for this office; and his unchanged decision during a long interval, wherein much influence was brought to bear on him in favor of other officers, is certainly highly complimentary. I am ordered to make a tour of this Department, including all of New Mexico; and in addition to the regular inspection of the troops, the staff department, &c., &c., I am directed to report on several heads cited to me as coming within the subjects referable to my Department.

These are statistics, many of which were covered in a long report I made in July, in compliance with instructions from the Secretary of War, Mr. Crawford. I am in hopes of completing the tour to the several posts in the Department, by the middle of October, after which I shall set out from El Paso for the east, either by way of San Antonio, the way I came, or make my way through Chihuahua, Monclova, Parras, Monterey, and Matamoras to New Orleans. I hope to be in Philadelphia by Christmas, as I am ordered to report in Washington, after completing the inspection of this Department.

The commanding officer of this Department has just received by special express (since the arrival of the mail) an order from General Scott, signed as Acting Secretary of War, directing that officer to take such steps as might be necessary in the event of an invasion of the soil of New Mexico by Texas, which he states is preparing to send fifteen hundred Volunteers hither, to establish her jurisdiction. We also hear the Compromise Bill in Congress has been lost. What does all this indicate? Are we to have a civil war — the South against the North? Unless something of this kind turns up, I shall be with you, I trust, by the time I have stated.

We have here now, as a visitor, the Bishop of Durango. He was received with great display, civil and military. I was invited by Don David Ortez to take a seat in his carriage, and go out for a few miles to meet the Bishop. There was a great crowd of ladies, officers, and Mexicans. About five miles distant the Bishop was met, and invited by Ortez to take a seat in his carriage, which he did; so I had a very good opportunity of seeing him. An excellent old man, polished and learned; also considered in

Mexico a pattern of morality and purity to his fellows of the clergy. The next day we all called upon him, and were very handsomely entertained. The following evening the old gentleman called on me to congratulate me on my appointment, which the mail in the interval had brought. He smoked a cigar with me, but the Vicario of Santa Fé who accompanied him, did not dare to smoke in his presence, though he accepted a fine cigar I offered him.

I set out the day after to-morrow (to-morrow I review and inspect the troops here) for the northern posts at Abiquiu, Taos, Rayado, and Vegas, and on my return pursue my tour to the southward, to Albuquerque, Cibolletta, Socorro, Don' Aña, El Paso, and San Elizario. After all this, I turn my face to the sunrise.

Oh, what a lamentable event has been the death of my much-loved old friend, General Taylor! I know nothing I have experienced for a long time that has shocked me as much. We were altogether unprepared for it. I fear from indications just now made known to us of the feeling arising among the Southern people, that his loss will be felt by the country before many months pass. I can write no more. Yours, &c.

[After completing the Inspection of the Ninth Military Department—New Mexico—visiting the numerous little forts, garrisons, or camps thinly scattered throughout that ill-starred Territory, the writer arrived at General Headquarters in Washington City about the middle of December, and there received a copy of the letter from the Adjutant-General's Office, dated June 24, 1850, the original of which had not reached Santa Fé before the writer left there. Now, having had a free and satisfactory interview with both the Secretary of War and the General-in-Chief regarding the subjects on which they desired a minute report, the following letter, dated Philadelphia, December 26, 1850, was written.]

INSPECTOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,
Philadelphia, December 26, 1850.

GENERAL:—In obedience to instructions from the War Department, embraced in a letter from your office, dated the 24th of June, 1850, I have now the honor to submit a report on the several subjects therein referred to, viz.: —

"1. The probable number of lives lost and of persons taken captives by the Indians, within the last eighteen months, in New Mexico; also the probable value of property stolen or destroyed within the same period."

In pursuing my inquiries on this subject, I found it extremely difficult, although I visited towns or settlements where, or in the neighborhood of which, depredations had been committed by the Navajoes, Utahs, or Apaches within twelve or eighteen months previous, to collect from the people information at all explicit or reliable; while the cases reported at the headquarters of the department, or the office of the Secretary of State, do not cover two-thirds, perhaps not one-half, of all that occurred. However, on the northern frontier, from Abiquiu to Las Vegas, there were enumerated to me about fifty-three persons who have been killed on that line within twelve months, from September 1, 1849, to September 1, 1850. In the six months preceding, there were some shepherds killed at different points along that line, probably ten or twelve, though I could not arrive at the number with any precision. These murders were committed by the Navajoes, Utahs, and Jicarilla Apaches, but principally by the latter. In the lower country, and along the Rio Grande, from Santa Fé to El Paso, about twenty persons have been killed within eighteen months; these were by the Navajoes, and White Mountain and Sacramento Mountain Apaches. The number of captives carried off from New Mexico within the same period, amount in all to thirteen that are known and enumerated. The probability, however, is that, many obscure persons have been killed and children carried off, besides those named.

If we assume the total ascertained of killed to be eighty-three, and of captives to be thirteen, I incline to the belief that from fifteen to thirty per cent. might be safely added to these figures without exceeding the truth.

As far as I could ascertain positively, by summing up individual cases, the number of animals driven off by these Indians within eighteen months prior to the 1st of September, 1850, is as follows:

Horses 181, which, at $40 each, is	$ 7,240
Mules 402, which, at $50 each, is	20,100
Horned cattle, (many of them work oxen,) 788, at $20 .	15,760
Sheep 47,300, at $1,50	70,950
Total	$114,050

To this amount fifty per cent. may be added. And when it is taken into consideration, that for twenty years past, the flocks and herds of this people have been yearly diminishing under the constant ravages of the wild tribes and that districts which formerly were covered with "stock" are now almost bare, the above amounts must be set down as heavy losses. For further information on this point, I beg leave to refer to my report of the 15th of July last, now on file at the Department.

"2. The capacity of the people of New Mexico to resist the incursions of the Indians, and the necessary military force to secure protection."

With regard to the first clause of the inquiry, the history of the country during the period of two hundred years past illustrates the fact which impresses itself on every one who visits New Mexico, that the people within themselves are altogether incapable of resisting the inroads of the Indians into the very heart of their territory. They have been from generation to generation so deeply imbued with the fear of their savage neighbors, that it is only necessary to raise the cry of "los Indios," and a dozen of them will run from a couple of Apaches armed with lance and bow. On several expeditions against these Indians they have been organized into companies, and have marched with the regular troops; but their chief exploits have been to secure the booty, after the enemy had been attacked and routed by the Regulars. In most of these instances, they have been allowed, as an encouragement, to possess themselves of the entire spoil; but while this continues to be their sole object, as it does now seem to be, they will not greatly expose their persons in the conflict; and I should therefore rate their capacity for Indian warfare at very little above "*zero*."

Better auxiliaries may be found in the Pueblo (or civilized) Indians of the Territory; and I would here respectfully repeat what I had the honor to present to the notice of the Department in my report of the 15th of July, viz., that advantages may accrue from extending to these people a marked kindness, and securing their confidence in the friendship and justice of our Government.

In replying to the latter clause of the second query, I would in the first place beg leave to invite attention to the facts stated in a preceding paragraph, *i. e.* the known losses sustained yearly and monthly by the inhabitants of this Territory from the inroads of large tribes of wild Indians, whose country envelops the Territory without interval on the north, south, east, and west. From the facts to which I refer, it must appear either that the military force *at present* in New Mexico is idle and inefficient, or that the extent of frontier intrusted to its protection is out of proportion to its strength and the character of its organization.

A single glance at the map, and a reference to the total number of troops for duty, as stated in the last report from the ninth department headquarters, will clearly demonstrate the truth of the last position. The question is, what (at the lowest calculation) is "the necessary military force to secure protection?"

In stationing a military force here, there are, apparently, two objects in view, requiring separate fields of action. The first is to afford present protection to the lives and property of the inhabitants; the second, to effectually check the marauding spirit of the Indians, and, at a subsequent period, to induce them to dwell in fixed habitations, to cultivate the soil to some extent, and to raise their own stock. The first must be effected, as far as practicable, by stationing small bodies of troops in the principal settlements. The second can only be accomplished by the permanent establishment of a strong force within the Indian country. To do this, I should answer that, for present service, the lowest figure at which this force can be put is 2200 (two thousand two hundred) effective men; of whom, at least, 1400 (fourteen hundred) should be mounted.

The question may, perhaps, be more satisfactorily answered by an illustration of the mode of warfare and pillage pursued by the Indians against whom the troops are to act, and a description of the country in which they are to operate, premising that the tribes above named (independently of the Comanches) count from four thousand five hundred to five thousand warriors. If we take Santa Fé, the seat of government and principal depot of munitions, as the central point, then the northern line of posts, for defence or protection, may be drawn through Abiquiu, on the northwest; Taos, Rayado, and Mora, on the north, to Las Vegas on the north-east. These are all important and thriving settlements; but each one is separated from the next by rugged mountain regions of from twenty to forty-five miles in width, running back into the Indian country, and thus affording from the latter easy and concealed approaches on the flanks of all of them. For the protection of life, of the crops, of the working animals, and all property immediately around the homesteads of these people, a small force at each of the points named is considered sufficient. But the principal wealth of the people is in their flocks and herds; and these must be sent (particularly in winter) into narrow mountain glades, affording fine pasturage, at the distance of from five to twenty-five miles from the settlements, where they are left for months at a time under charge of a few simple and unarmed shepherds. Here they are an easy prey to the Utahs and Jicarilla Apaches, who, crawling upon the listless shepherds, shoot them with arrows to prevent their carrying information, and then drive off the stock with impunity; or, if a shepherd, escaping, brings intelligence to the nearest military post, experience has shown that the pursuit is almost always fruitless.

The other line of settlement that should be occupied, is from Santa Fé southward, along the valley of the Rio Grande, to El Paso. Here small garrisons at Albuquerque, (or Bernallio,) Cibolletta, Socorro, (or twenty-seven miles below, opposite Valverde,) Don' Aña, and El Paso, (or San Elizario,) would, in the same way, give security to the homesteads, but nothing more. The only way in which a military force can be advantageously and effectively employed to put an end to Indian spoliations in New Mexico, is to post them, not in our settlements, or on our borders, but in the heart of the Indian country. And here they must be in sufficient strength to awe the Indians — to punish them in their strongholds for the offences they commit beyond their own boundaries. Three stations of this kind are deemed requisite, viz.: one in the Navajoe country, near the *cañon of Chi;* one in the Apache country east, somewhere on the eastern slope of the Sacramento Mountains, where water, grass, and timber, of excellent quality, may be found; and one in the south on the Gila River, or near the old copper mines. The latter is a very eligible position. It is a high country, with pure air, and possessing all the requisites for the establishment of a military post, together with abundance of game. At the first two posts there should be from four hundred and fifty to five hundred men each; at the last, three hundred and fifty. At most of the other points named above, a single company would be sufficient.

On completing the tour of the military posts in this Territory, it appears to me that the following would be a proper disposition of the troops at this time:

	Organization.	Probable effective strength.
Abiquiu, one company of infantry	84	75
Taos, one company of infantry	84	75
Rayado,* two companies of dragoons	170	150
Las Vegas, one company of infantry	84	75
Santa Fé, one company of infantry	84	75
Albuquerque, one company of infantry	84	75
Cibolletta,* one company of dragoons and one company of infantry	169	150
Socorro, one company of dragoons	85	75
Don Aña, one company of dragoons and one company of infantry	169	150
El Paso, one company of infantry	84	75
Navajoe country, four companies of dragoons, one company of artillery with battery of mountain howitzer, and one company of infantry	508	450
Apache country, five companies of dragoons, and one company of artillery with battery of mountain howitzer	509	450
Gila River, three companies of dragoons and one company of infantry	339	300
Grand total	2,453	2,175

* Rayado and Cibolletta are positions from which operations may be successfully carried into the Indian country. (See Inspection Reports, Nos. 5 and 7.)

Owing to the usual casualties of service, I do not consider that the average effective strength of companies can be safely estimated at more than seventy-five total.

The following troops are at present in New Mexico:

	Organization.		Total present September 30, 1850.
7 companies of dragoons . .	596		384
2 do. artillery . .	168		99
10 do. infantry . .	840		554
	1,608		987
Add to the above one full regiment of dragoons or mounted riflemen:			
10 companies of riflemen .	840	(probable strength)	750
	2,448		1,737

The above total present in New Mexico on the 30th of September last, viz., nine hundred and eighty-seven, would give only an average of fifty-two total to a company. Say, then, that each company is filled to seventy-five total, there will be —

19 companies, at 75 each	1,425
Add ten companies of rifles, at 75 each	750
This will give a total of	2,175

Thus, one regiment of mounted riflemen *in addition* to the force now in New Mexico, may be considered a sufficient or necessary military force to secure protection; but this is placing it at the very lowest figure at which it can safely be put.

The nature of the service in this country requires mounted troops almost exclusively; the distribution of supplies and munitions from the general depots to the frontier posts, the frequent visits of staff officers (paymasters, quartermasters, etc.) from post to post in the necessary discharge of their duties, the transmittal of orders and reports of constant occurrence in the usual course of service, all require mounted escorts or express riders.

The law authorizing the mounting of a portion of the infantry regiments would in some measure supply the deficiency of cavalry in the organization of the army, but there are many objections to this. One alone it is sufficient to cite, viz., the *increased expense*. This my own observation satisfies me will be the result in a few years of the adoption of this system. A better one, I believe, would be to change the organization of one or two of the foot regiments and convert them into *mounted riflemen*.

Among the advantages of adopting this course in preference to raising new regiments, the following may be named:—The officers of the infantry in general, particularly from the rank of captain descending, are fine horsemen. Their lives are passed almost entirely on the frontiers: hunting is a favorite recreation with them, and a majority of them keep their own horses; they are consequently good judges of horses, and well skilled in every respect in their management and treatment. They would, therefore, become at once capable and efficient cavalry officers, for they are already well grounded in the tactics. Again, the experience of twenty-five years has shown me that on an average about one half the infantry soldiers are more or less accustomed to horses, and would be *at least* on an equality with dragoon *recruits* in all that regards the horse. The remainder, with some exceptions, (who might be transferred to other foot regiments,) would in a few months manage their horses sufficiently well for all service on this frontier; whereas they would possess over any newly-organized regiments the all-important qualifications of discipline and a knowledge of the use of their arms.

I advance, General, for the consideration of the Department, the proposition to change the organization of one or *two* of the foot regiments; not as an expedient to remove the necessity so loudly calling for an addition to the army of one or more new regiments of dragoons or mounted riflemen, but because I am persuaded that the nature of the service to be required of the army for the next ten years will be such as to require that the *cavalry arm* shall greatly predominate in its organization.

"3. The best means of supplying the troops in New Mexico with recruits, horses, and subsistence."

In order to keep the companies in New Mexico full at the present standard, recruiting in the Atlantic and Middle States must be chiefly depended upon; re-enlistment will do but little towards it.

While in this Territory, my attention was requested by an officer of the medical department to the subject of the enlistment of hospital stewards especially for that office; and I have pleasure in submitting his views, viz., that they should be enlisted or employed especially for that duty; that their pay should be increased to that of paymaster's clerk. The advantages would be, that they would only be removed from the hospital at the expiration of their service; that the hazard incurred in putting men whose previous education has not fitted them for the duty into the hospital is very great; and that by the course recommended, the Government would save largely in men, as well as in medicines and hospital stores; that the increased pay proposed would bring into the service graduates of the schools of pharmacy of good character.

With respect to *horses*, they cannot be procured of sufficient size and strength in the Territory. It will, therefore, be necessary to purchase in the Middle States. But the horses from Missouri and Illinois, from which States most of the horses now in the Territory have been brought, are not found to stand the change of climate as well as those from a lower and more temperate latitude, as Tennessee and Kentucky. All horses, however, even from the last-named States, experience more or less the ill with *subsistence* I had the honor to report on the 14th instant. I would only further add, that it was remarked to me by Captain Bowman, regimental quartermaster of the third infantry, and acting assistant commissary of subsistence at El Paso, that much expense in transporting subsistence across the plains was incurred by packing *bacon, hard bread*, &c., in barrels; the bacon sides being cut into square pieces (the bones were not removed) left large interstices in the barrels, and these again leave intervals in the wagon bodies, by which much space is lost. He recommended that square boxes of convenient size, and made to fit in the wagon bodies, be used instead of barrels; also that hard bread be baked in square cakes, and be packed in similar boxes. I examined the weight of some of the barrels (whisky-barrels) used for bread, and found they ranged from forty-five to fifty-six pounds, while the hard bread contained did not exceed from ninety to one hundred and twelve pounds. Boxes would be lighter than these barrels, but it is questionable whether the bread would be as well preserved.

There is no reason, however, why all the hard bread required for use in New Mexico should not be made there, and for this purpose it would be well to send out one or two competent bakers.

"4. The probable number of inhabitants of New Mexico—Americans, Mexicans, and Pueblo Indians; also the number of each class within its limits whilst a territory of Mexico."

I have answered this query in my report of the 15th July last as fully, I believe, as I could possibly now, by going over the same ground again.

I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. A. McCALL,
Inspector-General.

Major-General R. JONES,
Adjutant-General U. S. A., Washington City, D.C.

[After completing the inspection of the military posts enumerated in the last preceding letter, the writer returned to New Orleans by way of San Antonio, and thence to Philadelphia. In 1851 he was ordered to make a tour of inspection of the posts on the Pacific slope in California and Oregon. Having completed that tour, and returned to Philadelphia, he remained *waiting orders* till April 1853. During that time his health had become much impaired, the result of long exposure in malarious regions; and at the time the order was received, he was too feeble to undertake the arduous journey required of him.]

PHILADELPHIA, April 22, 1853.

To the ADJT. GENL. U. S. ARMY.

SIR:—I had the honor to receive, yesterday, Special Orders, No. 11, directing me to make an inspection of the 9th Military Department, and I immediately acknowledge the receipt of the Order.

I have now to state that my health is not such as to authorise my undertaking this important duty, with the prospect of being able fully to discharge it to my own satisfaction or to the best interests of the service. I therefore respectfully tender the resignation of my commission of Inspector-General, and request it may be laid before the President of the United States for his acceptance.

The regret I might entertain in offering my resignation at this juncture is removed by the conviction that the office will be filled by one more competent.

I am, sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

GEO. A. MCCALL.

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
NEW YORK, April 23, 1853.

DEAR SIR:—The General-in-Chief [Gen. Winfield Scott] has desired me to express to you his sense of the loss the army will sustain by your withdrawal from it. I cannot better do so than by quoting the language used by him, in forwarding the tender of your commission, as Inspector-General of the Army, to the Secretary of War:—

"Herewith I forward for your consideration Colonel McCall's tender of his commission as Inspector-General of the Army.

"If the tender be accepted, the public service will lose a highly valuable and distinguished officer."

Happy in being the medium of communicating the above expression by its Chief of the sentiments of the Army,

I have the honor to be, your obedient servant,

SCHUYLER HAMILTON,
Capt. by Bt. A. D. C.

To Col. GEO. A. MCCALL,
Ins. Genl. U. S. Army.

[The resignation was accepted in compliance with the reiterated request of Colonel McCall. Thus terminated his connection with the service in which the better part of his life had been passed. The severing of the tie was like the mortal struggle, when

"Nature's ties decay, and duty, love, and action fade away.'

Reader, farewell.

"Half yet remains unsung; but narrow bound within the visible diurnal sphere." — *Milton.*]

NOTE.

Through the kindness of Dr. D. G. Brinton of Philadelphia, the author has received from Professor T. Rothrock, the following Note, together with an extract from Bartram's Travels in Florida, giving an interesting account of a Floating Plant, *Pistia spathulata*, which is in all probability the same as that found in Orange Lake and described on the preceding page, 197.

PHILADELPHIA, *Jan.* 18, 1868.

DEAR DOCTOR:—I've been looking up that floating puzzle. I incline to regard it as the "*Pistia spathulata*," *Michx.* Bartram says of the same plant, pp. 88, 89 of his Travels: "I set sail early, and saw, this day, vast quantities of the Pistia stratiotes (same as P. spathulata), a very singular aquatic plant. It associates in large communities, or floating islands; some of them a quarter of a mile in extent, and are impelled to and fro as the wind and current may direct. They are first produced on, or close to the shore, in eddy water, where they gradually spread themselves into the river, forming most delightful green plains, several miles in length, and in some places a quarter of a mile in breadth. These plants are nourished and kept in their proper horizontal situation, by means of long, fibrous roots which descend from the nether centre downwards towards the muddy bottom. Each plant, when full-grown, bears a general resemblance to a well-known garden *lettuce*, though the leaves are more nervous, of a firmer contexture, and of a full-green color inclining to yellow. It vegetates on the surface of the still stagnant water, and in its natural situation is propagated from seed only. In great storms of wind and rain, when the river is suddenly raised, large masses of these floating plains are broken loose, and driven from the shores into the wide water, where they have the appearance of islets, and float about, until broken to pieces by the winds and waves; or driven again to shore, on some distant coast of the river, where they again find footing, and there, forming new colonies, spread and extend themselves again, until again broken up and dispersed as before. These floating islands present a very entertaining prospect; for although we behold an assemblage of the primary productions of nature only, yet the imagination seems to remain in suspense and doubt; as in order to enliven the delusion and form a most picturesque appearance, we see not only the flowery plants, clumps of shrubs, old weather-beaten trees hoary and barbed with the long moss waving from their snags, but we also see them completely inhabited and alive, with crocodiles, serpents, frogs, otters, crows, herons, curlews, jack-daws, etc., there seems, in short, nothing wanted but the appearance of a wigwam and a canoe to complete the scene."

The above is Bartram.

There is a "*Telumbium luteum*," but as it has *Rhizomata*, which imply solid ground to hide in, I do not think it can be the plant. I can further find no instance recorded of its forming floating islands.

Yours truly,
T. ROTHROCK,
Junior of Pa. Med. Dept.

P. S.—Bartram tells us: "Having gratified my curiosity at this general breeding-place and nursery of crocodiles, I continued my voyage up the river without being greatly disturbed by them; in my way I observed islets or floating fields of the bright-green *Pistia* decorated with other amphibious plants, as "*Senecio Jacobia*," "*Persicaria amphibia*," "*Coreopsis bidens*," "*Hydrocotile fluitans*," and many others of less note."

THE END.